

# STARS AND STRIPES.®

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Free to Deployed Areas

## Inside

### MILITARY

Preparing to leave his post, Hagel warns of limits to military power

Page 6



### VETERANS

Advocates: End the 'hamster wheel' of disability appeals

Page 10



### PACIFIC

107 identifications of MIA remains made in 2014, JPAC says

Page 9

### NFL

Underinflated balls spotlight Belichick's reputation for trickery

Back page



# Gitmo CO relieved of duty

Navy captain fired after details emerge of alleged affair, suspicious death

By CAROL ROSENBERG  
*The Miami Herald*

The commander of the U.S. Navy base at Guantanamo Bay has been removed from the remote outpost and reassigned to headquarters, a Navy announcement said Wednesday, declining to elaborate because of an ongoing Naval Criminal Investigative Services probe.

The Associated Press reported that Capt. John R. Nettleton was relieved of duty Wednesday due to a loss of confidence

in his ability to command.

The AP cited U.S. officials as saying he was fired and is being investigated in connection with an alleged affair with a woman on the base and the recent death of her husband.

The Navy would not comment on the details of the investigation.

U.S. officials said Nettleton is under investigation in connection with the death of Christopher Tur, who was found dead on Jan. 11. The officials spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because they

weren't authorized to discuss the ongoing investigation.

Officials told the AP the alleged affair between Nettleton and Tur's wife was discovered during the course of the NCIS investigation into his death.

Officials did not provide any details on the cause of Tur's death.

The Navy statement said Navy Rear Adm. Mary M. Jackson, commander of Navy Region Southeast, reassigned Nettleton to her office in Jacksonville, Fla.

**SEE RELIEVED ON PAGE 8**



# TAKEOVER IN YEMEN?

YEMENI PRESIDENT, CABINET RESIGN AMID REBEL STANDOFF » Page 13

Houthi Shiite Yemenis wearing army uniforms stand atop an armored vehicle, which was seized from the army during recent clashes, outside the house of Yemeni President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi in Sanaa, Yemen, on Thursday.

HANI MOHAMMED/AP

QUOTE  
OF THE DAY

"I don't know what to expect. Now, I have nowhere to go. And I need a toothbrush."

— New York Yankees announcer John Sterling, after a huge fire struck the New Jersey apartment complex where he lived, forcing hundreds to evacuate

See story on Page 11

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TODAY  
IN STRIPES

American Roundup .....	17
Business .....	20
Comics .....	21
Crossword .....	21
Faces .....	18
Faith .....	19
Letters/Opinion .....	22-23
Sports .....	24-32
Weather .....	20

## WAR/MILITARY

## Poll: Afghans' economic outlook dims

Uncertainty over politics, security cited as concerns

By JOSH SMITH  
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Qadis family's dress-making business boomed in the heady days after the Taliban were ousted. But 12 years on, the family is among a vast majority of Afghans who say economic prospects are bleak.

A Gallup poll released Wednesday finds that the share of Afghans who say economic conditions are getting better sank to a record-low 6 percent. Sixty-seven percent say conditions are getting worse.

Economic sentiment in Afghanistan has been sharply declining since 2011, when 33 percent thought conditions were getting better; the figure for 2013 was 10 percent.

"In the past, business was really good," Rahim Qadis said over the whir of a sewing machine as he stood between rows of brightly colored dresses. "But in 2014, our sales were down 50 percent compared to the year before."

Customers are reluctant to spend because of uncertainty over the country's future stability, Qadis said.

"The lack of security is the only problem," he said. "People don't know what will happen. And so they don't buy."

As the NATO coalition force has shrunk and moved to a mission more focused on training and advising than combat operations, Qadis is just one of many Afghans who have a dark outlook on their economic future.

Security is not the only worrying factor. Nearly four months into his tenure, President Ashraf Ghani is still struggling to build a Cabinet. The situation raises concerns about political stability and his pledges to fight rampant corruption.

"This climate of uncertainty has fostered a crisis of hope that may prove as big an enemy to sustainable development and growth

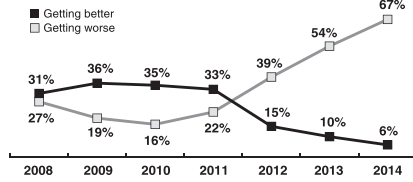


Josh Smith/Stars and Stripes

Khaled Qadis, center, discusses the drop in business at his family's dress shop in Kabul, Afghanistan. Last year saw a 50 percent drop in business from 2013, he said.

## Getting worse

Two in three Afghans see local economic conditions worsening, according to a recent Gallup poll.



SOURCE: Gallup

Stars and Stripes

as any security threat," wrote Gallup's Julie Ray, who laid out the findings in a report on Gallup's website.

The Gallup survey, conducted in August and September, was based on in-person interviews with 1,000 adults older than 15. It had a margin of error of plus or minus 3.6 percent.

Economic progress is often trumpeted by international aid organizations and coalition governments as evidence of the success of foreign military and economic intervention. Gross domestic product has risen "dra-

matically" to more than \$20 billion, or more than five times what it was in 2002, according to the U.S. Agency for International Development.

With the pullout of most international troops — together with the rise in insurgency violence and the reduction of international aid efforts — economic growth has leveled off.

Afghanistan averaged real GDP growth of about 9 percent each year from 2003 to 2012, according to the World Bank. In 2013 that growth tumbled sharply to 3.7 percent and dropped even

further to a projected 1.5 percent in 2014, Gallup noted. Per capita GDP remains 215th in the world out of 228 countries, according to the CIA's World Factbook.

The slowing growth has a real impact on the lives of Afghans, as many as 35 percent of whom are unemployed. The respondents in Gallup's latest poll see the outlook for jobs as the worst it's been since 2008, with 69 percent saying now is a bad time to find a job and just under 20 percent saying it's a good time.

"We are passing through a sensitive time, and obviously the political instability has adversely affected the economic side as well," said Kamal Safai, who sits on a budget and finance commission in Afghanistan's parliament.

A major part of the economic crisis is due to Afghanistan's continued dependence on foreign aid and investment.

"The uncertainty surrounding the security transition and the elections stalemate in 2014 have certainly drained Afghans' positivity about their economy," Ray wrote on the Gallup website. "But even more problematic for a country whose economic growth has been largely reliant on international aid and spending, the situation has also spooked investors."

Safai said he hopes some of that investment will return under the administration of Ghani, a former finance minister and World Bank official, who has pledged to improve relations with international donors. That was a hope echoed by Gallup researchers, but the survey's results paint a bleak picture for Afghans as international attention shifts elsewhere.

"With the U.S. and NATO combat mission ending only a few weeks ago, Afghans clearly have more questions than answers about what the future holds," a report on the Gallup poll concluded.

"Afghans are now the most discouraged they have been since 2008 about the economy and jobs; more are suffering; and the plurality think they will be worse off after the troops leave and that the Taliban will resurge."

Zubair Babakarkhail contributed to this report.  
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## WAR/MILITARY



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE KURDISTAN REGION SECURITY COUNCIL/AP

Iraqi peshmerga forces prepare for battle Wednesday against the Islamic State group south of the Mosul Dam in Iraq.

# Iraqi PM says ground troops need more aid

By VIVIAN SALAMA  
AND QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA  
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraq's prime minister on Wednesday appealed for more aid for the country's beleaguered ground forces, which have yet to score a decisive victory against the Islamic State group despite five months of U.S.-led coalition air raids.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Haider al-Abadi praised the coalition's air campaign but said the international community has stalled on commitments to train and equip the ground forces needed to retake major cities.

"We are in this almost on our own," he said. "There is a lot being said and spoken, but very little on the ground."

He spoke as he was leaving for London to take part in a meeting Thursday on the war effort with foreign ministers from about 20 countries, including Arab states. Secretary of State John Kerry is expected to attend.

The United States spent billions of dollars training and equipping Iraq's army during its eight-year intervention, only to see security forces crumble last summer when the Islamic State group swept across northern Iraq, capturing the country's second-largest city, Mosul. The failure of the security forces was largely attrib-



Kurdish peshmerga forces watch smoke rise Tuesday as fighters target Islamic State group positions in northern Iraq.

uted to the sectarian policies of al-Abadi's predecessor, Nouri al-Maliki. Since assuming office in September, al-Abadi has reached out to the Kurdish and Sunni minorities and has sought to revamp the armed forces, but the army has yet to retake much ground.

President Barack Obama, in his annual State of the Union address Tuesday, pledged to work with Congress on a new authorization for military action against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria.

In November, Obama authorized the deployment of up to 1,500 more American troops to bolster Iraqi forces, which could more than double the total num-

ber of U.S. forces to 3,100. None has a combat role.

The Pentagon has made a spending request to Congress of \$1.6 billion, focusing on training and arming Iraqi and Kurdish forces. According to a Pentagon document prepared in November, the U.S. is looking to provide an estimated \$89.3 million worth of weapons and other equipment to each of the nine Iraqi army brigades.

"We want to see an acceleration of the training, acceleration of the delivery of arms," al-Abadi said. He reiterated that Iraq does not want any foreign boots on the ground, but said it needs "support and logistics."

"We are fighting very hard to find resources to purchase arms," al-Abadi said. "We are left almost alone to get these arms and munitions for the army, for our fighters, and we expect much more."

On a visit to Baghdad last week, Gen. John Allen, the U.S. envoy to the coalition, said that advise-and-assist teams are working to train and equip 12 Iraqi brigades to prepare them for retaking Mosul and the western town of Fallujah. He said there is no timeline for an assault on those cities.

The U.S. and its coalition allies have carried out more than 1,000 airstrikes in Iraq since the campaign began in August — as well as hundreds more in neigh-

boring Syria. U.S. officials say the campaign has been somewhat successful, though it is likely to stretch on for years.

France, Britain, Australia, the Netherlands, Belgium, Canada and Denmark also have launched airstrikes in Iraq but are not involved in the air campaign in Syria.

Iran, meanwhile, has provided aid to Iraqi forces, particularly the Shiite militias allied with the government, and has sent frontline trainers of its own. It is not coordinating its efforts with the U.S.-led coalition.

Backed by airstrikes and aided by allies, Iraqi troops and pro-government militiamen have made limited gains.

Iraqi and Kurdish forces have pushed Islamic State extremists out of parts of Diyala province on Baghdad's northeast fringe, and Iraqi forces recently retook the oil refinery town of Beiji.

Farther north, Iraqi and Kurdish ground forces retook the Mosul Dam in August with the help of U.S. airstrikes — an achievement that is now under threat. The Kurdish Regional Security Council said Wednesday that Kurdish peshmerga fighters launched a new offensive to secure areas southeast and southwest of the dam.

"Bombing from the air has been very, very effective," al-Abadi said. "We are very thankful for the air campaign to support our military, but I think you cannot achieve big things without a real fight on the ground."

From London, al-Abadi is to travel to Davos to attend the World Economic Forum.



## EUROPE

## NATO: Russian buildup seen in Ukraine

By JOHN VANDIVER

Stars and Stripes

There are signs Russian forces are building up their presence in eastern Ukraine, where fighting in recent days between Ukrainian troops and separatists has intensified, NATO Supreme Allied Command Gen. Philip Breedlove said Thursday.

"What we do see is that the Russian-backed forces have renewed capability now to bring pressure on the Ukrainian forces, and have in several places moved the line of contact to the west. And this is concerning," Breedlove said during a news conference in Brussels after two days of talks with NATO defense chiefs.

Hallmark features of previous Russian buildups are evident, Breedlove said.

"We are beginning to see the signatures of air defense systems and electronic warfare systems that have accompanied past Russian troop movements into Ukraine, but we are unable at this moment to confirm any specific number of additional Russian troops inside eastern Ukraine," he said. Two previous Russian incursions involved the movement of similar military hardware, he said.

Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, commander of U.S. European Command, said during a visit to Kiev that it was "irrefutable" that the separatists were getting "direct sup-

port from Russia."

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on Wednesday that as many as 9,000 Russian troops are now in Ukraine, which has been waging war against Russia-backed separatists in the country's east for nearly a year.

Russia has consistently denied that it has sent troops to aid the separatists, and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Wednesday there was no evidence to support the claim.

Later Wednesday, Lavrov and the foreign ministers of Ukraine, France and Germany agreed to a dividing line from where both Ukrainian and separatist forces should withdraw heavy weapons, but so far there have been no reported signs of such movement, and fighting between the forces persists.

The conflict in Ukraine has spurred NATO to beef up its presence in eastern Europe to deter Russian aggression against current NATO member states that were formerly part of the Soviet Union or within the Soviet sphere of influence.

In Brussels, Breedlove and other top NATO military officials concluded two days of talks that focused largely on how the alliance will implement a new Russian Action Plan. The plan includes the establishment of a new spearhead rapid-reaction force, known

as a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force, which has reached interim capability.

Defense chiefs discussed the future shape of the reaction force and will make a recommendation to NATO leadership ahead of a defense ministers' meeting in February, where an announcement is expected on the unit's ultimate size and composition.

"2015 will be, and is, a critical year as we work to bring about the greatest change in our approach to collective defense since NATO's inception," Breedlove said.

Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which culminated in the annexation of the Crimea Peninsula in March, NATO has established a more robust presence in Poland and the Baltic states, which lie on Russia's periphery. The United States has taken a lead role in the rotational presence and training in those states.

Starting in the spring, USAREUR will send a team of advisers into western Ukraine to help train troops in areas such as combat life-saving techniques, tactics for preventing the jamming of battlefield communications equipment, and methods to guard troops against sophisticated Russian-made artillery, Hodges said.

"I think there are some areas [where] we can help," he told reporters during his visit to Kiev on Wednesday.

The training is expected to

focus on about four maneuver companies from the Ukrainian national guard and a headquarters, according to the Defense Department. The number of U.S. troops involved in the training is yet to be finalized.

In November, a medical team from Special Operations Command Europe also deployed to Ukraine to mentor 600 military personnel on basic battlefield medical procedures to enhance point-of-injury care.

That came on the heels of a major USAREUR multinational exercise in September, which involved sending 200 soldiers from the Vicenza, Italy-based 173rd Airborne Brigade into western Ukraine to work with troops from a host of countries.

The training initiative was in response to a request from the Ukrainian government and is part of a State Department effort to assist Ukraine in strengthening its law enforcement capabilities, conduct internal defense and maintain rule of law, said Lt. Col. Vanessa Hillman, a Pentagon spokeswoman.

The training mission demonstrates "U.S. commitment to security in the Black Sea region, and ... the value of forward-stationed forces accustomed to training with partner nations," Hillman said.

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## Previous leader returning to Sabers

By JENNIFER H. SVAN

Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — Less than a month after its commander was relieved of duty, Spangdahlem Air Base announced its welcoming back a previous leader to take charge of the 52nd Fighter Wing.

A posting on Spangdahlem's Facebook page said that Col. Joseph D. McFall "will rejoin the Sabers next month," referring to the wing's moniker. A wing spokesman confirmed the news Thursday.

McFall, who was the 52nd Fighter Wing's vice commander from July 2012 to June 2013, won't have far to go. He's currently the commander of the 435th Air Ground Operations Wing at Ramstein Air Base, according to his Air Force biography.

Spangdahlem's previous wing commander, Col. Peter M. Bilodeau, was relieved of duties in late December after less than six months on the job. Air Force officials in Europe said at the time that Bilodeau was removed because of loss of faith and confidence in his leadership, not for any misconduct or wrongdoing.

Col. Lars R. Hubert, the 52nd Fighter Wing vice commander, was appointed interim wing commander.

McFall received his commission through the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1993. A combat pilot, he's accumulated more than 2,350 flying hours in the F-16.

The 52nd Fighter Wing includes more than 5,500 military and civilian personnel who help maintain and deploy the unit's F-16 fighters and other military hardware. The base is poised to grow in the next five to seven years. Pentagon officials announced earlier this month that Spangdahlem would gain about 10 CV-22 Ospreys and 10 MC-130J aircraft, together with associated personnel from the 352nd Special Operations Group at RAF Mildenhall in the United Kingdom.

The closure of Mildenhall is part of a sweeping reorganization of U.S. forces in Europe recommended by the Pentagon to consolidate infrastructure and save money.

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## Prosecution rests in AFN slaying trial

By MATT MILLHAM

Stars and Stripes

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — The government rested its case Thursday in the court-martial of Staff Sgt. Sean Oliver, the Air Force American Forces Network technician charged in the killing of Petty Officer 2nd Class Dmitry Chepurov.

Oliver's defense team deferred its opening statement to the first day of the trial more than a week ago but will have an opportunity to make those remarks Friday morning when the trial resumes. Oliver's defense hadn't indicated Thursday how far the airman would take the stand.

Prosecutors spent more than a week presenting evidence allegedly tying Oliver to Chepurov's killing in December 2013 but wrapped up Thursday with nearly two hours of testimony from an other incident in Ohio in 2012.

In addition to premeditated murder and other charges related to the Chepurov case, Oliver also faces aggravated assault and obstruction charges for allegedly attacking his former wife's lover and coercing him into not pressing charges.

In the Chepurov case, prosecutors closed with results from blood samples taken from Oliver's clothing and the apartment where prosecutors believe he killed Chepurov, an AFN colleague.

DNA from bloodstains found on one of Oliver's boots matched Chepurov's, Robert Fisher, a forensic biologist from the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory, testified.

Fisher also found blood matching or consistent with Chepurov's DNA on a dish towel found in Oliver's car after it was seized by police and in stains found in the bathroom, foyer and a door frame at the apartment where Chepurov was allegedly killed.

Under cross-examination by Oliver's lead defense attorney, Fisher agreed that the blood evidence didn't prove that Chepurov was killed intentionally.

The prosecution presented three witnesses to the Ohio incident in January 2012.

At the time, Oliver was assigned to AFN in Mannheim, Germany. His then-wife, Angela Oliver, testified she had taken their three children and moved back to Heath, Ohio, in August 2011. There, she and Nathaniel Connor — a close friend of Oliver's — shared a house, she said.

Oliver went to Ohio on leave to visit his family and friends and to visit with his children, Angel Oliver said. She testified that at the time, she wasn't speaking to her estranged husband. They were not yet divorced.

After a night out drinking with Connor, Oliver drove him back to

the house his friend shared with his estranged wife and saw another man's car outside.

Connor testified that they both recognized the car as belonging to Graham Brannon, another mutual friend.

Connor said he persuaded Oliver to leave, but the airman returned 20 minutes later and dashed upstairs to Angel's bedroom. Oliver jumped on Brannon, Connor and Angel Oliver both testified, and choked and punched him.

Connor managed to pull Oliver off Brannon once, but Oliver attacked him a second time. Connor said he called the police at that point because he didn't have the energy to pull Oliver off Brannon again.

Testifying in a video deposition, Brannon said that while Oliver was choking him, "He said, at one point, 'If you don't press charges,

I'll let you up.'"

Brannon said he agreed to the deal, but "I don't remember having much of a chance to say anything" while Oliver was choking him.

Prosecutors allege that Oliver strangled Chepurov before he was stopped by German police with the sailor's body in his car on Dec. 14, 2013. German and military medical experts who conducted autopsies on Chepurov testified earlier in the week that they both believe Chepurov died from manual strangulation. Oliver, in a statement to Air Force investigators in December 2013, said he choked Chepurov to knock him out after he became belligerent, but not to kill him. He has pleaded not guilty to premeditated murder and other charges.

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## MILITARY

# Official: US should consider troops in Syria

By TRAVIS J. TRITTEN  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The new chairman of the House's military oversight committee said Thursday that the United States should consider putting some troops onto the battlefield in Syria to bolster the offensive against the Islamic State.

Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, said the Obama administration has locked the country into an ineffective military strategy by relying on an air campaign and unaccompanied foreign forces to roll back the extremist group. Front-line troops to guide airstrikes and to collect intelligence in Syria could be one way make the coalition war effort more effective, he said.

On Tuesday, President Barack Obama used his State of the Union address to tout his administration's strategy and said it has kept the nation out of another ground war in Iraq. But Thornberry took the reins this month of the House Armed Services Committee as part of an incoming Republican majority in both chambers of Congress that considers the president's assessment overly optimistic.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey said last fall that the United States may need to deploy ground troops to Iraq, and Thornberry's comments show some key Republicans in Congress might still back such a move — even into Syria, where a complex civil war is raging.

"My point is we should not tie our hands and pretend there is a border there when there is not," Thornberry told reporters during a roundtable discussion. "You have to look at where in Syria [U.S. forces would operate] and

the risk they would be under and could they be protected."

About 2,300 troops are deployed to Iraq to train and assist the country's military, with some dedicated to protecting those trainers. But so far, the military has limited Syria operations to the air.

The chairman said he understands the conflict in Syria is a "horrible mess" and that he voted in support of the Obama administration's plan to train and equip a proxy ground army of moderate Syrian rebels against the Islamic

State fighters, who now control large swaths of that country and Iraq. Congress granted the Pentagon authority last month to carry out the program, which is expected to begin training fighters this spring and will likely occur outside the war-torn country.

But Thornberry said his position differs with Obama from there, and that Congress may need to tell the public an ugly truth about the difficulty of the fight in Syria and the need for an expanded military role on the ground. He

said there is already a wide consensus among lawmakers and the military that troops to guide airstrikes in Iraq would make operations there more effective.

"Political constraints are not going to get the job done," he said. "This is hard enough even if we don't tie our hands."

The House Armed Services Committee exercises strong influence over the military by crafting defense budgets and legislation.

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## Navy sealift vessel runs aground off Okinawa

Stars and Stripes

The U.S. Navy and Japanese authorities are working to refloat a Military Sealift Command vessel after it ran aground Thursday off the coast of Okinawa.

The USNS Sgt. Matej Kocak, an 821-foot long, 50,000-ton prepositioning ship designed to carry supplies and ammunition in support of American ground troops, ran aground off the island's east coast at 11:30 a.m., according to a Navy release. The ship is located some six nautical miles from the coast of Uruma.

None of the ship's 127 civilian crewmembers was injured in the incident, according to the release. All remained on the ship.

An early assessment found no hull leaks and no damage to the surrounding area, the release stated. Tugboats were on scene to stabilize the vessel and to further assess the situation.

Ship groundings can cause significant damage to ship hulls, propellers and surrounding infrastructure.

Military Sealift Command operates as the Navy's logistics arm, providing fuel, ammunition and underway replenishment to ships at sea. Civilian mariners crew MSC ships, and a civilian master is in charge of all ship maneuvers, even when military detachments are on board.

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## MILITARY

# Hagel warns of limits on military might

By JON HARPER  
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — As he prepares to hand over the reins of the Pentagon, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel is warning that military power has its limits and Americans should avoid believing that force alone can transform conflict-riven societies in the Middle East and elsewhere.

"It is easy to drift into other missions, and I do believe that you always have to ask the tough questions. What happens next? Where do you want this to end up," Hagel said in an interview with Stars and Stripes and Military Times. "Any secretary of defense has to always be on guard that we don't inadvertently sometimes drift into a more accelerated use than we thought of what our military was going to be [doing] ... I think the two long wars that we were in the last 13 years is pretty clear evidence of ... how things can get out of control, and drift and wander."

Hagel's warning came as the U.S. military has returned to Iraq to help the Iraqi government defeat the Islamic State, which has seized about a third of Iraq and Syria. The U.S. Central Command is conducting an air campaign against the militants, and about 1,550 U.S. troops have been sent to Iraq to train and advise government and Kurdish militia forces. Another 800 U.S. troops are providing force protection.

President Barack Obama has ruled out using U.S. combat troops to fight the insurgents and has placed a cap of 3,100 personnel on the number of U.S. military forces deployed to Iraq. But some members of Congress have urged the U.S. to play a more robust military role.

Meanwhile, about 10,600 U.S. troops remain in Afghanistan to advise and assist Afghan forces after the American combat role ended last month.

## Based on experience

Hagel's caution about mission creep stems from his experience as a combat infantryman in Vietnam, where a U.S. advisory role morphed into a long and divisive war involving at its height more than a half-million American servicemen.

"We're products of our experiences, and we all come at our jobs ... being shaped by those experiences," Hagel said. "The violence, the horrors, the suffering that I saw [in Vietnam] conditioned me ... I saw the suffering of our own troops; I saw the suffering of the Vietnamese people; I saw terrible things, which war always produces."

Hagel said his experience in Vietnam, where both he and his brother Tom were wounded, convinced him that "you cannot impose your will, you can't impose your values, you can't impose your standards, your institutions on other societies and other cultures. It has never worked; it never will work, as noble as you believe



RUBEN R. RAMIREZ, THE EL PASO TIMES/AP

**Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel meets with paramedics, military police and border patrol agents during his visit to Fort Bliss, Texas, on Jan. 15. In an interview this week, Hagel discussed the limits of military power.**

[the effort is.]"

As a combat veteran and former VA official, Hagel is sensitive to the effects of open-ended military commitments on the force, including active-duty members, their families and veterans.

Since assuming the post in early 2013, Hagel has initiated institutional reforms and a number of reviews to try to get at some of the problems affecting the military community. He said he probably devoted as much time to those issues as anything else.

But he remains worried about the health of the all-volunteer force after 13 years of counterinsurgency fighting, and thinks more work needs to be done.

Physical and mental health, suicide, morale and sexual assault within the ranks are some of the major people issues that Hagel has tried to tackle during his tenure.

At the same time, budget cuts, troop reductions and concern over pay and benefits have left the rank-and-file uncertain about their future.

"Anytime there is uncertainty in an institution or a family ... you will have people off balance," Hagel said. "They will be concerned, and of course they are [right now] ... I think there is a good deal of uncertainty out there."

## Proud of efforts

Hagel said it was impossible to solve all of the problems on his plate during his fairly short tenure, but he's proud of his efforts to the ball rolling in the right direction.

"You're not going to fix some of this in a year or two years, but ... you can start to turn it around," he said. "I hope that we can continue to do these things because health of the force is essential to everything we do," he said.

"If you really have major

breakdowns, you will not be able to continue to recruit and retain quality people. And without quality people, you don't have much."

In the past, Hagel has discussed problems that plagued the force in the Vietnam era, including poor discipline and tensions within the ranks.

"I'm a little more oriented to these kinds of human dynamics

and health of the force issues than maybe some would be because I saw it, I lived it, I understand it," he said.

Hagel also waded into two controversial gender issues.

When the former infantryman was asked if he had any concerns about women being integrated into ground combat units — a concept the services are experi-

menting with — he said: "Anyone who is qualified and capable and wants to do a job in the military should have the opportunity to do that. [But] we're not going to lower standards ... No one wants that. If you're quality, you're capable, you want to do it, you should have an opportunity."

Hagel was also asked whether transgender people should be allowed to serve in the military. They are currently barred from doing so, but there are calls from the LGBT community and elsewhere to change the rules.

He declined to say whether he thought the exclusion should be lifted, but noted that the military has dealt with controversial policy changes in the past, including racial integration, the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell," and gay marriage.

"This institution has been on the cutting edge of social change in this country since World War II," Hagel said.

He believes the military needs to respect the desires of individuals to serve, but not make any changes that would jeopardize mission preparedness.

"I have confidence in the process and the system [and believe] that the transgender issue will be dealt with in a fair way," he said.

Hagel is expected to be replaced next month after his nominated successor, Ashton Carter, is confirmed by the Senate.

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## MILITARY

# Privatized-housing residents to feel BAH pinch

By TOM PHILPOTT

Families living in privatized military housing units will not escape the impact of moves Congress made last month to dampen the value of Basic Allowance for Housing, or BAH, according to a Defense Department housing expert who is coordinating with service branches to implement the changes.

The result will be that families moving into privatized base housing will begin to pay rent that is 1 percent higher than their monthly BAH, and could be 3 percent higher by 2017.

Older generations of military retirees and veterans might not know that, starting in 1997, the services began to enter partnerships with private developers to renovate or build and then to manage and maintain, stateside family housing. Today there are 205,000 privatized military housing units, mostly apartments and townhouses, but also single-family homes.

The only stateside housing units the military still owns are historic general officer quarters and small clusters of homes at small, remote bases where no private partners could be enticed to cut takeover deals.

Families electing to live in privatized base units sign rental contracts that, until this year, had one unique feature: Rents always matched their monthly BAH. Those who agree to pay using payroll allotments avoid paying security deposits. Other occupants must write monthly checks or arrange electronic transfers to the housing management companies just like families have to do when renting on the local economy.

Congress last month voted

## MILITARY UPDATE

to allow BAH rates, starting in 2015, to be trimmed in two ways: by setting rates to cover only 99 percent of average rental costs for members' pay grades and assignment areas; and by no longer including in BAH added dollars to cover the expense of renter's insurance in case personal property is damaged or stolen.

Both changes are reflected in BAH rates published Jan. 1. As military renters moving into housing on the economy feel the effect of slightly dampened allowances, so, too, will families moving into privatized base housing, the defense official said. He declined to be named so he could speak more frankly about privatized housing and new BAH changes.

"The basic premise is that whatever is happening to everybody in town, whatever added burden they're bearing, whether it's 1 percent [of average rental costs] out of pocket or absent renter's insurance, then people on base will bear the same burden," the official said.

A BAH rate-protection rule ensures that families living off base won't see a drop in allowances unless they move to new assignments or have to change residences. That same rule protects those already residing on base. As long as they stay in current base housing, they won't have to pay rent in excess of monthly BAH.

Sometime soon, however, Army, Air Force, Marine Corps and Navy housing officials will give notice that members moving

into privatized housing will have to pay rent equal to BAH plus 1 percent. That will match the 1 percent absorption rate designed into 2015 BAH rates that is already being felt by new occupants of housing on the local economy.

The out-of-pocket cost, the housing expert said, is "not hard to figure out because the absorption is the same for each pay grade all across the country. With one percent, the absorption range ... is going to range from about \$16 a month up to \$25."

Under current privatization deals, housing managers are required to provide renters' insurance to military tenants. Under new contracts, renters will have to purchase their own.

Some might find they already have such coverage through USAA or other insurers that are popular with the military. If they don't, families will be encouraged to buy their own renter's insurance, but it will be their personal choice.

The Obama administration's defense budget for fiscal 2016 is expected to seek another 1 percent dampening of BAH next January and again in 2017. If Congress agrees, BAH would cover only 97 percent of rental costs.

Military housing officials have more in mind than fairness for all BAH recipients in requiring tenants on base to pay some rent out of pocket as BAH rates are curbed. Those rent payments not only cover fees promised by contract to housing managers, but

**Congress last month voted to allow BAH rates to be trimmed by setting rates to cover only 99 percent of average rental costs by no longer including added money to cover renter's insurance.**

part of those dollars support local "recapitalization" accounts to repair and maintain base housing units.

The housing official explained that about one-third of privatized units, mostly those in high-rent areas like California and Hawaii, have robust recapitalization accounts because the BAH there is relatively high. Another third of base housing has adequate maintenance and repair dollars.

The final third of privatized housing inventories lies in rural areas, mostly on or near Army and Air Force bases. Those recapitalization accounts are barely sufficient to keeping housing in good condition. Those bases could begin to see housing deteriorate if cash flows from renters are allowed to fall by 3 percent, after inflation, during the next three years.

"As far as we're concerned, it's an equity issue," the official said. "But it's also a maintaining-quality-of-housing issue. And if you put those two together, it's just obvious that's what we should do."

DOD and service officials discussed for 18 months how rents

on base should be handled if Congress agreed to a plan to curb BAH rates. The services had a different worry in 1997 when they began signing privatization deals with developers on the understanding that rents collected would equal BAH. At that time, BAH covered only 80 percent to 85 percent of average rental costs on the economy. Some developers soon struggled to avoid default.

In 1999, then-Defense Secretary William Cohen won a pledge from Congress to raise BAH gradually until rates covered 100 percent of average rental costs off base. The big worry for privatization deals shifted to windfall profits. That's when the services began restructuring deals so a portion of rental streams went into recapitalization accounts, which are jointly managed by local military housing officials to ensure housing quality is sustained.

The big worry now might be getting renters on base to understand.

Send comments to Military Update, P.O. Box 231111, Centreville, VA, 20120; email [mlupdate@aol.com](mailto:mlupdate@aol.com); or Twitter: Tom Philpott @Military\_Update.

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## MILITARY

# Relieved: Gitmo leader is not involved in prison camps

## FROM FRONT PAGE

The announcement follows the mysterious death of Tur, 42, on the base that is being investigated by NCIS. Tur was found dead in the waters of Guantanamo Bay on Jan. 10 at about 11:30 a.m., Mike Andrews, a Navy Region Southeast spokesman, told the Miami Herald on Jan. 15. He had been reported missing a day earlier.

At the base, spokeswoman Kelly Wirfel said on Jan. 16 in response to questions about the NCIS investigation that Tur had been working at the base commandery since he moved there with his family in June 2011. Wirfel confirmed that Tur's widow, Lara, is director of the Fleet and Family Services Center at the base but would not say whether she worked for Nettleton.

The base commander has no role in the running of the war-on-terrorism prison camps at Guantanamo. That is the responsibility of a rear admiral who commands a separate Detention Center Zone within the 45-square-mile base in southeast Cuba — and answers to Marine Gen. John F. Kelly, the commander of the U.S. Southern Command in Miami.

The prison functions much like a tenant on the base, with its 2,000 or so staff members granted wide access to base facilities as well as the separate prison zone. Jackson

sent her chief of staff, Navy Capt. Scott Gray, to run the base itself until Nettleton's replacement is chosen.

As commander, Gray will be responsible for the functioning of the airport, seaport and other base facilities. As acting base commander, Gray will also succeed Nettleton at a monthly meeting with a Cuban counterpart along the fence line that separates the U.S.-controlled base from Cuba proper. The two sides discuss topics of common interest at those monthly meetings.

Nettleton, a pilot and native of Haines City in Central Florida, started his military career as a Marine enlistee in 1984. He joined the Navy through the Naval Aviation Cadet program in 1987 and at least once a month piloted a base C-12 airplane to Miami on base business and to keep up his flying hours.

Nettleton, known as "the skipper" for his role as base commander, successfully navigated a Nativity scene controversy in 2013 that was kicked off by troops protesting a decision by kitchen workers to set up crèches in both the Navy base and detention center cafeterias. He resolved the flap in a single day by ordering the religious displays moved to the base chapel.

This is the second time in a decade that a Guantanamo base



Capt. John R. Nettleton

commander has been recalled to Jacksonville. In July 2005, Navy Capt. Leslie McCoy was relieved following a three-month inspector-general investigation of his leadership. He was never returned to the post.

Successive Navy commanders have likened the job to that of a small-town mayor, in part, because Guantanamo feels like small-town America.

Beyond the prison camp on a bluff overlooking the Caribbean, the base has a school for sailors' children, facilities to provide power and desalinated water for about 6,000 inhabitants, a golf course, a chapel and a McDonald's — all serving a mixed military and civilian contractor workforce.

It is governed by military law, meaning the captain can discipline residents, impose curfews and supervise contents of the base newspaper. A police unit of Navy Masters at Arms also answers to him.

# S. Korea: Exercise with US to go forward

By ASHLEY ROWLAND

Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea's Defense Ministry said Thursday that annual joint spring drills with the U.S. will proceed as planned, despite North Korea's call to cancel them in exchange for its pledge to suspend nuclear testing.

It was unclear how the decision to go ahead with the Foal Eagle field training and Key Resolve command post exercise would affect Seoul's call for the two Koreas to hold their first summit since 2007.

"These are the annual exercises for the defense of the Republic of Korea," a Ministry of National Defense spokesman said, speaking on customary condition of anonymity. "Therefore, we need to hold them, and North Korea will need to return quickly to meaningful conversation which could reach real progress in denuclearizing North Korea."

Washington and Seoul tout the two exercises as defensive in nature, but they routinely draw condemnation and threats from the North.

Approximately 12,700 U.S. troops — about half from outside the peninsula — and more than 200,000 South Korean troops took part in last year's exercises, as well as a number of U.S. naval and air assets from outside South Korea. Details for this year's drills, which the MND said will

begin in early March, have not been announced.

U.S. Forces Korea did not respond Thursday to a question about whether it was considering canceling or scaling back the exercises in response to the North's offer, but said in a statement that they "do not reflect any real-world or current events."

During the 1990s, the U.S. and South Korea canceled the major Team Spirit exercise several times as encouragement for the North to end its nuclear weapons program.

North Korea has carried out three increasingly powerful nuclear tests, the most recent two years ago. It successfully launched a multistage rocket in December 2012 and has threatened to attack South Korea and the U.S. mainland.

David Garretson, a Seoul-based professor of international relations at the University of Maryland, said both sides seem to sense there is an opportunity for talks to take place. While he doesn't believe the U.S. and South Korea will cancel the exercises, they might downplay them.

"North Korea's proposal is, 'We won't have a test if you don't hold the exercise,' and of course that's not going to happen," he said, adding that the North doesn't seem to be making as much noise about the drills as usual.

He added that the exercises are "a part of the U.S. and the ROK

saying that we are firm in our defense commitments to each other and we need to do this training so we can defend the South against the North. From our point of view, we'll always take that position."

But, in a climate in which talks are a possibility, he said the U.S. and South Korea could scale back the drills in size or publicity. The U.S. could also bring fewer outside assets than in previous years.

"That would be another indicator on our side of playing it down, without saying we're not going to have an exercise at all," he said.

Stars and Stripes staffer Yoo Kyong Chang contributed to this story. rowland.ashley@stripes.com

# Navy opens subs to enlisted women

By STEVEN BEARDSLEY

Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — The Navy is opening submarine billets to enlisted women, with plans for the USS Michigan to become the first boat integrated with female enlistees in 2016.

The service released three administrative messages Wednesday laying out guidelines for the change, along with the application process for the Michigan billets. The Navy is looking for chief petty officers in one of five ratings, or job specialties, and for junior enlisted in any rating, or without a rating. Under the rule change, all submarine job specialties — whether nuclear or non-nuclear — are now open to female sailors.

The announcement comes almost five years after the Navy decided to integrate women into submarines. Female officers came aboard the Navy's Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines in late 2011.

The Navy laid out its long-term integration plan last summer, calling for women to make up 20 percent of enlisted billets on those already integrated subs by 2020.

Under the instructions released Wednesday, enlisted women will come aboard submarines that already have female officers serving on board. Those are the larger Ohio-class ballistic- and guided-missile subs, which have two rotating crews each. The smaller, Virginia-class attack submarines began receiving female officers this month.

Chief petty officers will report to their crews before junior enlisted. The Navy says it will make changes aboard each submarine to accommodate women.

After integration of the Michigan next year, plans call for female enlistees to integrate 12 additional Ohio-class crews by 2021, with two to four crews integrating annually. Enlisted women will wait until 2020 to report to Virginia-class submarines. Those crews will man

newly constructed subs in the class, which are designed to accommodate both sexes.

Applications for the Michigan billets are due by April 15, with the selection process beginning the next day. A panel will be convened to select the chief petty officers. The application process for other integrations will be announced in the future, according to the guidelines.

Enlistees selected can convert their ratings to any submarine ratings, including nuclear. Those who choose to convert to non-nuclear job positions will need to go through the two-month Basic Enlisted Submarine School and any necessary rating school. Those converting to nuclear positions will join new recruits, going back to boot camp before entering the nuclear pipeline.

The five ratings for chief petty officer are information systems technician, logistics specialist, culinary specialist, yeoman and independent duty corpsman.

The continued integration of submarines follows the broader military trend of opening once-restricted billets to women. The Pentagon removed the military-wide ban on women in combat units in 2013, three years after the Navy's decision to integrate subs, and required gender integration plans from each of the services.

As of last summer, more than 60 female officers were serving aboard 14 submarines.

The Navy has described the integration process so far as smooth, although a recent episode aboard the Ohio-class USS Wyoming raised questions. The Navy investigated 12 petty officers for sharing and watching a video of a female officer showering aboard the submarine, according to the Navy Times. One of the petty officers made the recording and passed it along, according to the report.

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## PACIFIC

# JPAC saw increase in identifications in 2014

Better technology, more lab space help program more than double number of MIA remains ID'd

By WYATT OLSON  
Stars and Stripes

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii — The beleaguered command tasked with finding the remains of lost U.S. troops said it has more than doubled the number of identifications of MIA remains in 2014 over the year before.

The 107 identifications for 2014 by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command came primarily from remains linked to the Korean War (42), World War II (36) and the site of a 1952 crash of an Air Force cargo plane into Mount Gannett in Alaska (17).

The number of identifications from the Vietnam War, at 12, was about half the average of 21 IDs made annually over the previous nine years.

John Byrd, JPAC's laboratory director, credits the increase to a mix of new procedures, increased lab space and developments in technology.

## 'Success for us'

"It's success for us, big success for us," Byrd said during an interview at his office at JPAC headquarters at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

"A lot of the programs that we've put together through the years are reaching maturity and bearing fruit now."

The words "success" and "JPAC" have not been associated often in the past couple of years.

A Defense Department Inspector General's report in October concluded that the MIA accounting effort lacked clarity of mission, a strategic plan, a disinterment policy, a centralized database of MIAs and coordination with combatant commands and host nations.

More than 40 current and former employees complained of mismanagement, which taken as a whole "paint a picture of long-term leadership and management problems," the report said.

**'It's success for us, big success for us. A lot of the programs that we've put together through the years are reaching maturity and bearing fruit now.'**

John Byrd  
JPAC's laboratory director

Last year the defense secretary ordered an overhaul of the agency, which is now underway.

Just how the restructuring and new personnel will mitigate shortcomings and increase the effectiveness in accounting for MIAs remains to be seen.

## An opportunity

JPAC spokesman Lee Tucker described the agency makeover as "a phenomenal opportunity" for "taking an already talented and great organization and doing nothing but improving it."

Asked how that assessment jibes with shortcomings cited by the IG report, Tucker said: "I think that we're being very responsive right now in addressing all those concerns head-on in forming an entirely new DOD agency."

"We're not just putting Band-Aids on here and there."

The increase in identifications for 2014 is the first sign of improvements to come, he said.

The 107 remains identified won't be officially "accounted" for until their nearest kin are contacted and they agree with JPAC's findings, Byrd said.

"We have an eclectic, diverse tool kit that takes advantage of the kinds of records that the military built up and maintained over the years," Byrd said.

One of JPAC's most productive programs now is identifying a set of Korean War remains called K208.

The remains were turned over to the U.S. in 208 boxes toward the end of that conflict and are estimated to hold the commingled remains of about 350 individuals, based on subsequent testing, Byrd said.

Using the standard operating procedures of the time, U.S. mortuary personnel dipped the remains in a chemical bath to sanitize them before examination, he said.

Among the chemicals was formaldehyde, which years later was discovered to have degraded DNA in the tissue and bones, which makes sampling difficult.

"We were stuck for a long time," Byrd said.

## 'Wheels turning'

But "a lot of wheels turning between 2008 and 2012" helped produce last year's identifications, he said.

"In 2006 we were identifying one or two soldiers a year from the K208, and it had been that way since the early 1990," Byrd said. In 2008, a separate lab was set up for the K208 remains.

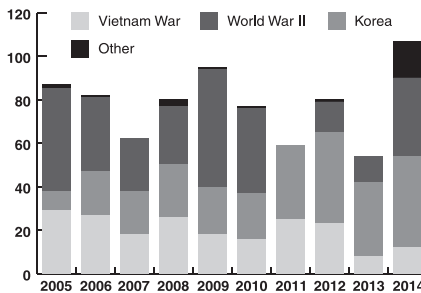
"That gave us the ability to take all of the remains out at one time and look at them as a large group," Byrd said.

"The problem with that group is that they're commingled in a very massive way."

The lab developed a DNA protocol for "untangling" the commingled remains.

"That protocol is one of the big

## Identification of remains by JPAC



SOURCE: Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command

Stars and Stripes

breakthroughs that has helped speed things up," Byrd said. "We've identified over 40 Korean war cases this year."

Thirty of those were K208 remains, with an additional 10 from remains disinterred from the graves of unknown soldiers buried at National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, also called the Punchbowl.

## Chest X-rays

Another development over the past five years aided in identifying Korean War remains and, to a lesser degree, those from World War II: chest X-rays.

Sometime around 2005, JPAC learned that the services had taken and stored chest X-rays of inductees during the 1940s and '50s to screen for tuberculosis.

Numerous times, JPAC queried the National Archives and Records Administration, which holds the bulk of military records in warehouses in St. Louis, but were always told their whereabouts were unknown, Byrd said.

Then, around 2008, the National Archives contacted JPAC "out of the blue" and said they were on the verge of recycling the entire stash of Army and Air Force X-rays for the minute amount of silver on each film.

JPAC retrieved about 7,500 X-rays belonging to soldiers or airmen missing from the Korean War and about 1,200 from the World War II era for those services.

Although the X-rays were of the lungs, the neck vertebrae and collarbones are also captured in each shot. Bones and teeth have patterns and shapes that are unique to a person, much as fin-

gerprints are, Byrd said.

Technicians superimpose the induction X-ray over an image of found bones, which at times "match up perfectly," he said.

"Most forensic experts consider that kind of radiographic comparison to be positive identification, meaning that you can find uniqueness such that if you find a match, it shouldn't be anybody else — if it matches up on multiple points."

## X-rays of inductees

More recently, JPAC found and took possession of similar X-rays taken of inductees for the Navy and Marines. Each shot, however, was loaded onto reels that contain hundreds of X-rays, and over the past year, JPAC has been unraveling the chaotic filing system.

But in that time, they've found X-rays for 80 percent to 90 percent of the Marines missing from the Korean War.

"For World War II we have a long way to go, but so far they culled out about 1,400 X-rays of missing sailors and Marines," Byrd said.

Global climate change and melting glaciers played a role in retrieving and identifying 17 airmen from the cargo plane crash 62 years ago.

In 2012, the crew of an Alaska Army National Guard Black Hawk unit on a training flight saw a tire, life rafts and oxygen bottles on a glacier, according to a report by ABC News.

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## MILITARY



PHOTOS BY TED S. WARREN/AP

## Care on the fly

Above: Members of the Air Force Reserve 446th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron work during a training flight Wednesday on a C-17 cargo plane out of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. Right: Master Sgt. Natalia Stockhausen, top, a flight medic, gives instructions as she works on a mannequin representing a medical patient. Most medical evacuations of wounded military members are performed by Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard units.



## Marine ready for next post

By JENNIFER HLAD  
Stars and Stripes

SAN DIEGO — It's been more than 30 years since Sgt. Maj. Ronald L. Green was a private, but the Marine Corps' next top enlisted leader said he still tries to see things from the most junior Marines' point of view every day.

"I'm the type of Marine who looks through the lens of the private," Green said. "What's good for the private is good for everyone."

Green, who has served as the sergeant major for 1 Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Pendleton since June 22, 2012, on Tuesday was chosen by Commandant Gen. Joseph Dunford as the 18th sergeant major of the Marine Corps. He will assume his duties as Dunford's senior enlisted adviser Feb. 20 at a ceremony at the Marine Corps War Memorial in Virginia.

The 50-year-old father of three said the challenges that await him and the rest of the Marine Corps in the future are the same challenges they faced yesterday. "There's an enemy out there, that enemy gets a vote, and our job is to make sure he doesn't win the election," he said.

He said the service must continue to focus on readiness in all areas, including personal and family readiness.

"We pride ourselves on doing

better every day," Green said. "Readiness bleeds throughout. It's about fighting wars, it's about being better individuals, better human beings."

Green was selected for promotion to sergeant major in 2004. He has deployed to South America and Iraq and traveled around Europe and Africa as sergeant major for Marine Corps Forces Europe and Marine Corps Forces Africa. He has visited Afghanistan but has not deployed there.

In the past two years, previous commandant Gen. James Amos and the outgoing sergeant major, Sgt. Maj. Michael Barrett, focused many of their discussions with Marines about ethics, standards and good decision-making skills. Green said he feels certain Dunford also will emphasize ethical and moral character.

The Marine Corps brings in people from across America and all over the country, Green said, and "we hope to return better citizens back to our nation. That's why we focus on those things."

Staff Sgt. David Humphries served under Green in 2007, when Green was the sergeant major of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 39, at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar and Humphries was a sergeant. He said Green made a point to talk to all the Marines and "the Marines seemed to soak up his message."

"He's very, very good at motivation, at always being positive," Humphries said. Green also encourages young leaders to be engaged and take care of your Marines," Humphries said.

Staff Sgt. Pablo Rojas Ramirez also served under Green at MALS-39 and said he remembers Green wanted the Marines to know that the Marine Corps is "a lifestyle... something inside, not just a job."

Rojas Ramirez remembers Green saying, "If you cut me, I bleed little USMCs," he said.

Green, an artilleryman who enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1983, said he wakes up every day and thanks God that he can continue serving. He loves to "lead Marines, and learn from all Marines," he said. "That's my biggest joy every day."

Even though the number of Marines deployed in combat zones is significantly lower now, Green said the Corps must stay vigilant.

"Every day we're not fighting, we're preparing to fight," he said.

Dunford interviewed a handful of candidates for the sergeant major job, and Green said he is humbled and honored to have been chosen. He said he will do all he can to take care of Marines, sailors, soldiers and military families.

"Mission first, and Marines always," he said.

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## Lawmakers: Vets' appeals hurt by claims process

By HEATH DRUZIN  
Stars and Stripes

The effort to clear a massive backlog of veteran disability claims is hurting efforts to address a similar backlog in appeals of denied claims, say advocates demanding reforms to an onerous "hamster wheel" system that leaves veterans languishing for years.

A congressional subcommittee hearing Thursday focused on the appeals process, noting that the Department of Veterans Affairs has about 350,000 pending appeals of denied service-connected disability claims.

"I am aware that the [VA] chose to prioritize certain initial claims in recent years, but I must say that when veterans in my district share that they waited six, eight, 10 years to resolve a meritorious appeal of a service-connected disability claim, I just find that alarming and unacceptable," Rep. Ralph Abraham, R-La., said.

Veterans wait an average 3½ years to get an initial decision and often years longer for the VA to finalize that decision. There are almost 510,000 original disability claims pending, with more than 240,000 deemed "backlogged" — meaning the veteran has been awaiting a decision for at least 125 days.

When veterans' disability claims are denied, they face another lengthy process, involving multi-step appeals in which their cases often pingpong between national and regional offices for years.

VA officials have said they are aggressively working to clear the appeals backlog, but that they are hamstrung in part by a complex system that they are legally required to uphold.

"VA recognizes that under the framework established by current law, veterans are waiting too long for final resolution of appeals," Laura Eskenazi, vice chairwoman of VA Board of Veterans' Appeals, said in written testimony submitted to a House subcommittee. "VA cannot fully transform the appeals process without stakeholder support and legislative reform."

Veterans groups and advocates lined up to blast the VA appeals system at Thursday's hearing, in front of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs subcommittee on disability assistance and memorial affairs.

"It appears the mission for some VA bureaucrats is to limit the government's liability to our nation's veterans by formalizing

**'VA cannot fully transform the appeals process without stakeholder support and legislative reform.'**

Laura Eskenazi  
vice chairwoman of VA Board of Veterans' Appeals

the claims and appeals processes to the point where benefits are unfairly restricted," Jim Vale, director of the Vietnam Veterans of America veterans benefit program, said in submitted testimony.

A statement submitted to the hearing by Gerald Manar, deputy director of Veterans of Foreign Wars, called on the VA to stop ignoring appeals in favor of the initial claims backlog and increase staffing on the appeals board.

The Veterans Board of Appeals "has neglected large segments of other work in order to give the illusion that it is making progress on reducing its 'workload' — self-defined as disability compensation and pension claims — and its 'backlog' — again, only disability and compensation and pension claims," according to his testimony.

In submitted testimony, Bart Stichman, a prominent veterans attorney and joint executive director of the nonprofit National Veterans Legal Services Program, decried the "hamster wheel" that veterans get caught in, even after their appeals appear to have been resolved.

"There's a duty to assist the veteran but not a duty to sabotage the claim," he said. He laid out a five-point plan to reform the process, including prohibiting the Board of Veterans' Appeals and VA regional offices from pursuing negative evidence against a claim after veterans have shown sufficient evidence to support their claims.

Lawmakers at Thursday's hearing said the VA and Congress must act now.

"We need to take action so we don't get too far behind so we're not having this exact same hearing two years from now," Rep. Dina Titus, D-Nev., said.

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## NATION

# GOP takes on Obama's foreign policy

By GREG JAFFE  
and PAUL KANE  
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Republicans on Wednesday delivered a swift and bold response to President Barack Obama's exuberant State of the Union address by taking direct aim at the administration's foreign policy authority.

House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, invited Israel's prime minister to address Congress next month on Iran and the controversial role that U.S. sanctions should play in the difficult relationship with the Islamic government in Tehran.

The invitation was a strong signal by Boehner that he intends to challenge Obama on his handling of Iran and the spread of Islamic extremism, where the president's support has been sometimes tenuous.

In a meeting with his House GOP colleagues, Boehner said that if the president "expects us to stand idly by and do nothing while he cuts a bad deal with Iran," he was going to be disappointed: "Two words: 'Hell no!'" Boehner said.

According to Republican aides, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who

has a strained relationship with Obama, has accepted the offer. He is expected to make the address in February.

The invitation follows Obama's threat to veto any new congressional sanctions on Iran while his team is negotiating an agreement that would prevent Tehran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

**'I don't believe I'm poking anyone in the eye.'**

Rep. John Boehner  
House speaker

Obama has been battling with lawmakers, including some members of his own party, to forestall congressional action imposing sanctions before the negotiations are completed.

New Jersey Sen. Robert Menendez, the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Sen. Mark Kirk, R-Ill., have a proposed bill that imposes sanctions if the talks fail.

Netanyahu's visit comes at a delicate time

for Obama, who has put the chances of a deal with Iran at only 50 percent. The trip also underscores the high emotions surrounding the Iranian nuclear negotiations, which have caused splits even among some of the president's traditional allies.

At a meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Menendez slammed Obama for not being tough enough on Iran. "I have to be honest with you, the more I hear from the administration and its quotes, the more it sounds like talking points that come straight out of Tehran."

Netanyahu, who is the midst of a competitive election, is expected to make the case for taking a harder line on Iran in an effort to wrest concessions from the country's leaders.

The invitation to Netanyahu seemed to be a deviation from normal diplomatic practice, in which the executive branch — and not a legislative leader — would coordinate the visit of a head of state. The White House said Netanyahu's failure to inform the White House of the trip was a departure from protocol.

Boehner disagreed, saying: "I did not consult with the White House. The Congress can make this decision on its own. I don't believe I'm poking anyone in the eye."

## GOP measure to limit abortions falls short

WASHINGTON — With thousands of anti-abortion protesters in town, Republicans are ready to push legislation through the House designed to please them. But it's not the bill an embarrassed GOP was hoping for.

Republican leaders had planned House passage Thursday of legislation criminalizing most abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy. Late Wednesday they abruptly postponed that measure indefinitely after concluding they were short of votes.

Instead, the House will vote on legislation barring taxpayer funding of abortions — a prohibition that's already largely in place. Republicans say the bill will tighten the restrictions and make sure no funds flow to abortions under the Affordable Care Act.

## Man gets 40 years in dismemberment case

WAUSAU, Wis. — A man was sentenced Wednesday to 40 years in prison in the fatal shooting and dismemberment of a Minnesota man.

Kou Thao, 28, pleaded no contest in September to second-degree intentional homicide in the April 2013 death of Tong Pao Hang, 58, of St. Paul, Minn. Thao was sentenced in Marathon County Circuit Court. The Wausau Daily Herald Media reported his sentence includes 20 years of extended supervision after his release.

Thao, who was also convicted of hiding a corpse and possession of a firearm by a felon, was accused of shooting and dismembering Hang, and taking Hang's severed head to Milwaukee in the trunk of his car in the spring of 2013.

## San Diego officer files discrimination lawsuit

SAN DIEGO — A San Diego police sergeant has filed a racial-discrimination lawsuit against the city claiming he was punished for complaining about a racist cartoon that was used in a training class, a newspaper reported Wednesday.

Ten-year department veteran Arthur Scott — who is black — says in the Superior Court lawsuit filed Tuesday that he was the victim of a hostile work environment and on-the-job retaliation after objecting, the UT San Diego report.

San Diego police Chief Shelly Zimmerman said in a statement that the department will take the allegations "very seriously."

## FBI concludes probe of Ferguson shooting

WASHINGTON — The FBI has completed its investigation into the police shooting of an unarmed, black 18-year-old by a white police officer in Ferguson, Mo., a U.S. official said Wednesday.

The Justice Department has not yet announced whether it will file a federal civil rights charge against former Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson. But officials and experts have said such a prosecution would be highly unlikely, in part because of the extraordinarily high legal standard federal prosecutors would need to meet.

From The Associated Press

## Focus on business tax urged

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew dismissed efforts in Congress to overhaul the nation's tax laws by lowering the top income tax rate paid by individuals, saying lawmakers should instead focus on simplifying taxes paid by businesses.

Lew said Democrats and Republicans are far apart on how much wealthy individuals should pay in federal income taxes. He said there are more areas of agreement on business taxes.

"I don't think that there's any advantage in pretending that there aren't big disagreements on the individual tax side," Lew said at a forum hosted by the Brookings Institution, a Washington think tank. "We had a national debate just two years ago about the top rate. We're not looking at the kind of negotiation to go back to lower the top rate."

"While our views on individual tax reform may be far apart, there is a broad set of business tax reforms on which we should be able to agree," Lew added.

Lew's comments came a day after President Barack Obama proposed raising taxes on the rich and using some of the revenue to finance tax breaks for the middle class. Congressional Republicans panned the speech, saying there is no way they would support the proposals in the House and Senate to enact tax increases.

On Wednesday, congressional Republicans said they were disappointed the Obama administration isn't pushing to simplify taxes for individuals. Still, key Republicans said they would welcome more talks about business taxes.



Julio Cortez/AP

Smoke rises as firefighters hose water onto an apartment complex in Edgewater, N.J., on Thursday morning after flames engulfed the building Wednesday.

## Fire consumes NJ apartment complex

The Associated Press

EDGEWATER, N.J. — Hampered by winds and frigid temperatures, firefighters battled a huge fire Wednesday night at a New Jersey apartment complex that sent flames sky high and smoke visible from New York City across the Hudson River.

There were no initial reports of injuries in the blaze that broke out around 4:30 p.m. at The Avalon at Edgewater in the city of Edgewater, located along the Hudson River across from Manhattan. Authorities said everyone in the four-story building apparently was able to get out safely. They had not determined the cause of the fire.

Residents were ordered to evacuate and were led to a nearby school. As the fire continued

to rage, hundreds who lived at the complex, including New York Yankees announcer John Sterling, wondered what would be left of their homes.

"I don't know what to expect" Sterling told the New York Daily News after finding a hotel room. "Now, I have nowhere to go. And I need a toothbrush."

Plumes of thick, black smoke issued from the blaze, and New York emergency officials advised residents in Manhattan and the Bronx that they might see or smell smoke.

Edgewater Mayor Michael McPartland declared a local state of emergency. He said schools would be closed Thursday and access to roads would be restricted until further notice.

Hours after the fire started,

the entire building was engulfed in flames, The (Bergen) Record reported. Hamza Abdul told the newspaper he was at work when a colleague called to tell him about the fire so he rushed home.

"I can't believe it," he said. "It's all ashes now."

He told the newspaper he planned to stay at a friend's house.

Authorities cordoned off some streets around the burning building, but no major traffic problems were reported.

More than 14 years ago, a fire started at the same location where a five-story condominium complex was under construction and destroyed nine homes and damaged several others. The Aug. 30, 2000, fire forced the evacuation of dozens of nearby residents.



## WORLD

## US, Cuba lay out path to resuming diplomatic ties

The Associated Press

HAVANA — The United States and Cuba began laying out the path to normalized ties Thursday as the highest-level U.S. delegation to the communist island in more than three decades held a second day of talks in Havana.

Officials from both countries described the morning session as cordial, straightforward and focused on the details of converting their interest sections into embassies.

The details include ending caps on staff, limits on diplomats' movements and, in the case of the U.S. building, removing guard posts and other Cuban structures along the perimeter.

Both sides said they expected the negotiations to require more than Thursday's meeting to resolve, raising the possibility of future rounds. That could set back U.S. hopes of reopening the embassies before April's Summit of the Americas, which Presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro are expected to attend.

Gustavo Machin, Cuba's deputy chief of North American Affairs, said the meeting was productive and took place "in a relaxed atmosphere of respect."

"Look at my face," he said, smiling. "It reflects the spirit in which we've been talking up 'til now."

Cuba is demanding its removal from a U.S. list of state sponsors

of terrorism, which Washington says it is considering.

On Wednesday, the U.S. said it sent additional ships to the Florida Straits to halt Cuban rafters. But Washington rebuffed demands for broader changes to U.S. migration rules that grant virtually automatic legal residency to any Cuban who touches U.S. soil.

Cuba's government blames the Cold War policy for luring tens of thousands of Cubans a year to make perilous journeys by land and sea to try to reach the U.S. Still, many Cubans are worried the elimination of the rules would take away their chance to have a better life in the U.S.

In Washington, Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson said America's "wet foot, dry foot" approach, which generally shields Cubans from deportation if they reach U.S. territory, remains in effect. He stressed that those trying to come illegally would most likely be interdicted and returned.

Cuba's head of North American Affairs, Josefina Vidal, called for the U.S. to end "exceptional treatment that no other citizens in the world receive, causing an irregular situation in the flow of migrants." American officials instead pressed Cuba to take back tens of thousands of its nationals whom U.S. authorities want to deport because they have been convicted of crimes.

The Associated Press

DONETSK, Ukraine — A mortar shell hit a bus Thursday in the Ukrainian rebel stronghold of Donetsk, killing at least 13 people, the city's leader said. It was not immediately clear which side was responsible for the attack, but angry residents punched and kicked a captured soldier dragged to the scene by the rebels.

The mortar killed passengers instantly and blew out the windows of a nearby building. Separatist leader Alexander Zakharchenko blamed Ukrainian government troops for the attack, calling it a provocation.

The civilian death toll has been mounting in the conflict between Ukrainian troops and Russia-backed separatists that the United Nations says has killed more than 4,700 people since April.

Residential areas in eastern Ukraine have been frequently struck during artillery duels between the warring sides. The bus hit Thursday, however, was far from the front lines, in Donetsk's

central Lenin district.

The separatist-run Donetsk News Agency cited officials as saying the shell was fired from a portable 82-mm caliber mortar. That type of weapon used would seem to indicate the shell was fired from rebel-held territory.

Zakharchenko said a "raiding party" suspected in the attack had already been detained. He did not elaborate.

Ukraine's Defense Ministry said it believed the shells were fired from residential areas inside Donetsk and the incident occurred 9 miles from the nearest government positions. It said evidence so far indicated that the responsibility for the attack lay with "illegal armed formations."

The attack follows a surge of fighting last weekend for control over Donetsk's war-ravaged airport. Ukrainian forces have all but abandoned the airport after months of bitter battles against the rebels, although military officials continued to say Thursday that their forces still held part of the terminal.

The Defense Ministry said six of its soldiers had died over the previous day at the terminal, which lies on the northern edge of Donetsk, part of 10 soldiers killed overall in fighting across eastern Ukraine. Sixteen Ukrainian troops were taken prisoner after the fighting at the airport.

One of the prisoners was brought to the scene of the bus shelling Thursday morning, while bodies still lay in the road, to be paraded before furious local residents. Some in the crowd punched and kicked the soldier. He was quickly bundled into a waiting car by rebel militiamen as a crowd pursued them.

Diplomats from Russia and Ukraine agreed Wednesday on a dividing line from where the warring sides should pull back their heavy weapons. Hours earlier, separatist forces were continuing to deploy more heavy arms and manpower to an emerging flash point in eastern Ukraine near the second-largest rebel city, Luhansk.



MANU BRABO/AP

Russia-backed separatist rebels advance in the direction of the airport in Donetsk, Ukraine, on Thursday. A mortar shell hit a bus in Donetsk on Thursday, killing at least 13 people, the separatist leader in the city said.

## 13 killed in shelling of city bus in east Ukraine



RAMON ESPINOSA/AP

A journalist records remarks by Gustavo Machin, Cuba's deputy chief of North American Affairs, during the second day of talks between Cuban and U.S. officials in Havana on Thursday.

## Indonesian divers recover 6 more bodies from AirAsia crash

The Associated Press

PANGKALAN BUN, Indonesia — Indonesian divers retrieved six more bodies on Thursday from waters around the sunken fuselage of the AirAsia jetliner that crashed last month.

Divers struggled with strong currents and poor visibility in an attempt to lift the fuselage and what appears to be the plane's cockpit from the seabed at a depth of 100 feet.

So far, 59 bodies have been recovered from AirAsia Flight 8501, which plunged into the Java Sea with 162 people on board while en route from Surabaya, Indonesia's second-largest city, to Singapore. Officials believe the rest are still inside the main fuselage.

National Transportation Safety Committee head Tatang Kurniadi ruled out sabotage Wednesday as investigators analyzed data from the aircraft's cockpit voice

and flight data recorders with advisers from Airbus, the plane's manufacturer.

Transport Minister Ignasius Jonan told Parliament earlier this week that radar data showed the plane was climbing at an abnormally high rate — about 6,000 feet a minute — then dropped rapidly and disappeared. He did not say what caused the plane to climb so rapidly, but the pilots had asked to climb from 32,000 feet to 38,000

feet to avoid threatening clouds and were denied permission because of heavy air traffic. No distress signal was received.

An excessively rapid ascent is likely to cause an airplane to go into an aerodynamic stall. In 2009, an Air France Airbus A330 disappeared over the Atlantic Ocean in bad weather while flying from Rio de Janeiro to Paris. Investigators determined from the jet's black boxes that it began

a steep climb and then went into a stall from which the pilots were unable to recover.

Airbus spokesman Justin Dubon said it was too early to comment on possible similarities between the two crashes.

A preliminary report on the AirAsia accident is expected to be submitted to the International Civil Aviation Organization next week, Kurniadi said, adding that a full analysis could take a year.

## WORLD

# Pressured by rebels, Yemeni president quits

By AHMED AL-HAJJ  
The Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen — Yemeni officials say the president has resigned under pressure from Shiite rebels who seized the capital in September and have confined the embattled leader to his home for the past two days.

Presidential officials said Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi resigned after being pressured to make concessions to the rebels, known as Houthis. He earlier had pledged political concessions in return for the rebels withdrawing from his house and the nearby presidential palace, but Houthi fighters remained deployed around both buildings throughout the day.

Military officials close to the president, who like the other officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to be interviewed, said Hadi resigned after the Houthis pressured him to give a televised speech to calm the streets.

Hadi's move came shortly after the Yemeni government submitted its resignation on Thursday.

Prime Minister Khaled Bahah's resignation came as the U.N. envoy to the Arab world's poorest country met with representatives from the rebels and other political factions to try to implement a deal reached Wednesday to end the crisis.

It remains unclear who really controls the country, whose government is viewed as a key U.S. ally in the fight against al-Qaida.

Yemeni law says the parliament speaker — Yahia al-Rai, a close ally of ousted President Ali Abdullah Saleh — would assume



A Houthi Shiite Yemeni mans a machine gun Thursday atop an armored personnel carrier seized from the presidential guards during clashes outside the presidential palace in Sanaa, Yemen.

the presidency, but the Houthis effectively control the capital, several other cities and state institutions.

Twenty-four hours after signing the deal, heavily armed Shiite rebels remained stationed outside Hadi's house and the presidential palace.

Bahah's technocratic government was formed in November as part of a United Nations-brokered peace deal after the Houthis overran the capital in September.

Bahah, a political independent, posted his resignation on his official Facebook page, saying he had held office in "very complicated circumstances." He said he resigned to "avoid being dragged into an abyss of unconstructive policies based on no law."

"We don't want to be a party to what is happening or will hap-

pen," he added.

In an attempt to end the logjam, U.N. Envoy Jamal Benomar arrived to the country and held a meeting with Houthis and other political factions to push for implementation of the deal.

In a brief news conference before the meeting, Benomar told reporters that the deal — in essence an activation of the previous U.N.-brokered agreement struck in September when Houthis overran the capital — is "the only solution for Yemen."

Yemen's emerging power vacuum has raised fears that the country's dangerous al-Qaida branch, which claimed the recent attack on a French satirical weekly, will only grow more powerful and popular as the nation slides toward fragmentation and the conflict takes on an increas-

ingly sectarian tone. The Shiite Houthis and the Sunni terrorist group are sworn enemies.

While the capital was free of violence, clashes erupted southeast of Sanaa between Houthi gunmen and local tribesmen.

Tribal leaders said two tribesmen and four gunmen allied with Houthi rebels were killed in Khawlan-Watadah, 30 miles from Sanaa.

The violence appeared to subside by midday, but a serious flare-up in the region lying along the road to Marib province, an oil-rich area in central Yemen and a haven for al-Qaida fighters, could torpedo peace efforts. At the entrance of Marib, clashes also erupted between Houthis and local tribesmen over new checkpoints erected by tribal fighters.

## Gitmo detainees not going to Yemen

By NEDRA PICKLER  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In another challenge to President Barack Obama's efforts to close the Guantanamo Bay prison, a ban on transferring detainees to Yemen has been effectively pushed back into place because of security concerns in the volatile Middle Eastern nation, administration officials say.

While Obama approved sending detainees back to Yemen nearly two years ago, his administration has yet to use that authority. Officials say deep concerns about the threat posed by a Yemeni-based al-Qaida offshoot have removed that option for the foreseeable future, although that could change if conditions improve. The officials described the stance on condition of anonymity without authority to speak on the record.

Obama said in his State of the Union address Tuesday that he will not relent in his determination to close Guantanamo before he leaves office, and the administration is working on agreements with third countries willing to take Yemenis who are clear to leave the U.S. prison in Cuba.

# Japan agonizes over ways to free Islamic State hostages

By MARI YAMAGUCHI  
AND ELAINE KUMABACH  
The Associated Press

TOKYO — Lacking clout and diplomatic reach in the Middle East, Japan scrambled Thursday for ways to secure the release of two hostages held by the Islamic State group as two people with contacts there offered to try to negotiate.

The militants threatened in a video message to kill the hostages within 72 hours unless they receive \$200 million. Based on the video's release time, that deadline would come sometime Friday.

Government spokesman Yoshihide Suga said Thursday that Japan was trying all possible channels to reach those holding the hostages — including journalist Kenji Goto, 47, and Haruna

Yukawa, 42, the founder of a private security company.

Japan had not received any message from the Islamic State since the release of the video, he said.

The crisis is a test of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's push to expand Japan's role in international affairs and to raise the profile of its military. Tokyo lacks strong diplomatic connections in the Middle East, and Japanese diplomats left Syria as the civil war there escalated, adding to the difficulty of contacting the group holding the hostages.

So far, the only initiative made public was an offer by Ko Nakata, an expert on Islamic law and a former professor at Kyoto's Doshisha University, along with journalist Kousuke Tsuneoka. Both are converts to Islam.

Appearing at the Foreign Cor-

respondents Club of Japan, Nakata, who is also a former Islamic specialist at the Japanese Embassy in Saudi Arabia, read a message in Japanese and Arabic.

"Seventy-two hours is just too short. Please wait just a bit longer, and do not try to take action immediately," he said, addressing the militants. "If there is room to talk, I'm ready to go and negotiate."

Nakata urged the Islamic State to "explain the group's plan to the Japanese government, and wait for a counterproposal from our side." He also proposed offering \$200 million in humanitarian aid to refugees and residents of areas controlled by the Islamic State, through the Red Crescent Society.

The Red Crescent Society is operating under the Islamic State's control. Why don't we seek

Turkey's mediation and give the money for the people affected by the conflicts in Iraq and Syria? I believe this could be a rational, acceptable option," he said.

A freelance journalist, Tsuneoka was released after being held hostage in Afghanistan in 2010. Tsuneoka and Nakata visited Syria in September in an unsuccessful attempt to gain Yukawa's release. Goto was seized sometime after late October when he entered the area, reportedly while trying to help Yukawa.

In his last communication with the Islamic State group several months ago, Tsuneoka said they had promised not to kill Yukawa or to demand ransom.

"It's a desperate situation," Tsuneoka said. "I don't recall a hostage who survived after appearing on the video. So the situation is rather hopeless. And a thin

thread of hope that is left now is a direct dialogue with the Islamic State, and we are the only people who have connections."

It is unclear if the two would be allowed to go to Syria, since they have been questioned by Japan's security police on suspicion of trying to help a Japanese college student visit Syria to fight with the Islamic State group.

Tsuneoka said they would contact the militants only with a go-ahead from the Foreign Ministry. If they do, "we'll use a communication channel that they (Islamic State group) suggest, and move from there," he said. "We also can ask their representatives to come meet us in Turkey."

Suga refused to comment directly on their offer, though he said Tokyo was "prepared to consider all possible ways to save the two hostages."

**“Dearest Julia. And so, Hitler’s treasured stationery has come to this. Imagine how many times he would turn in his grave if he knew a Jew was writing on his precious personal stationery.”**

**U.S. Army Sgt. Danny Jacobson**  
May 6, 1945

# GI’s letter home is of historical note

By **ANA VECIANA SUAREZ**  
Miami Herald

**D**anny Jacobson was a 26-year-old Army sergeant, thousands of miles away from his hometown of Muskogee, Okla., when he penned a four-page letter to his wife back in the states. World War II was winding down, Hitler had committed suicide six days earlier, and half a dozen administrative clerks from the 179th Infantry had set up shop in a Munich apartment.

But this wasn’t just any apartment. It was one of Adolf Hitler’s many German residences, where he had lived with his longtime companion, Eva Braun. And the off-white stationery Jacobson used for his letter? Hitler’s very own. It included Hitler’s name and the Nazi swastika printed on the top left corner.

“Dearest Julia,” Jacobson wrote in a tidy script on May 6, 1945. “And so, Hitler’s treasured stationery has come to this. Imagine how many times he would turn in his grave if he knew a Jew was writing on his precious personal stationery.”

The almost seven-decades-old letter is now part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. How it got there, after being kept in obscurity until last year, is the tale of a committed son and a doting family who persuaded a 95-year-old man that this missive was worth attention.

Still, the retired jeweler can’t understand what the fuss is about.

“I don’t get it,” said Jacobson, sitting in the tiny living room of the Sunrise, Fla., apartment he shares with his third wife, Joy. “It’s just a letter. I must’ve sent 20 others on that stationery.”

This one, however, survived. His son, Joe, a thoracic cancer physician and chief quality

officer at Boston’s Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, donated the letter and an early 20th-century Rosenthal statuette, both souvenirs Jacobson took from Hitler’s living quarters, to the Holocaust Museum last fall.

“I had held onto the letter for the past 20 years, pretty much out of sight all that time,” the younger Jacobson said. “But I realized the letter was an artifact, and I was afraid it would get lost somehow. I was nervous about holding on to it.”

The letter is rich with the telling details of a soldier’s daily life. Written to a woman he had married a month before shipping out, it has a light tone and a hopeful message as he describes Hitler’s personal quarters as relatively untouched in a city that had been bombed “beyond repair.”

In the first page, he calls the Nazis “the Superman of the world ... a very defeated and broken people.” He characterizes the weather as “warm enough to get along without a heavy jacket” and gushes about a stack of five letters he had received from her.

Teresa Pollin, a curator at the Holocaust Museum, said history comes alive with these personal mementoes. The letter is now being treated by museum conservators, but no decision has been made about where or when it will be displayed. The staff is working on an exhibition of Americans in the Holocaust, “and this seems like it would fit in very well with that.”

She said the first line of the letter says it all. “It’s quite unusual and ironic that, being Jewish school, is using Hitler’s stationery.”

Jacobson, who was drafted in the fall of 1940, worked mostly as an administrative clerk during the war, following his division through seven major campaigns from Africa to Italy to France to Germany. When he and his fellow soldiers were given the order to go to the apartment building in bombed-



CHARLES TRAINOR JR., MIAMI HERALD/TNS

**Danny Jacobson holds a photo copy of a letter written on Adolf Hitler’s stationery with a photo of himself in uniform in World War II. He found the stationery in an abandoned apartment in Munich.**

out Munich, he had no idea they would be walking around Hitler’s living quarters.

“When you’re in the Army, no matter what your position, you do whatever they tell you to do,” he said. “And wherever we went we took our rifles with us.”

Once in the apartment, which obviously had been abandoned in haste, Jacobson realized where he was but didn’t consider it a big deal. “At that particular time it didn’t hit me that I was in this special moment in history,” Jacobson said. “We were just doing our job.”

Joy’s daughter’s fiancé, Joey Terranova, tries to get him to tell a few war stories. As a history buff, Terranova worries that those memories will be lost to future generations. “You can’t forget what happened,” Terranova said one morning as they sip black coffee together. Jacobson shrugs it off.

Pollin believes the letter holds special significance in these times, when European Jews are again facing rising anti-Semitism.

“A letter like this,” she said, “shows that justice prevailed. One has to hope that it will again.”



DARNO VOJNOC/AP

**Serbian screenwriter and director Vuk Rsumovic based his acclaimed film, “No One’s Child,” on the true story of a feral child in Bosnia.**

## Feral child’s plight reveals war’s brutality

By **JOVANA GEC**  
The Associated Press

**H**ELGRADE, Serbia could have been a Serb, a Croat, or a Muslim. It didn’t really matter. Not until the war broke out. Then the feral child, found by hunters in the Bosnian forests and raised in a social care center in Serbia, was forced to return to Bosnia, where his randomly chosen name would determine his destiny.

“No One’s Child,” the first feature film by Serbian director Vuk Rsumovic, is based on a true story that unfolded during the Yugoslav ethnic carnage of the 1990s. Exposing the senseless brutality of war through the eyes of a boy of undetermined ethnicity, it has captured the attention of critics at international festivals — from Venice to Palm Springs, where Rsumovic won The New Voices/New Visions award.

It remains to be seen if the film, which opens at cinemas across the Balkans next month, can win the hearts of the home au-

diences in Serbia and Bosnia — the former foes still reeling from the conflict.

“He can see people killing each other, but he can’t tell the difference. They are all the same to him,” Rsumovic said of the boy. “The absurdity of it all becomes clear when you look at the war from his perspective.”

The bloodshed in the former Yugoslavia erupted when the ex-federation’s Serbs, Croats and Muslims turned against one another and moved to create their own states. More than 100,000 people were killed and millions were made homeless in the 1991-95 conflict.

The tale of “No One’s Child” began when Yugoslavia was still intact in 1988.

Authorities in Bosnia — one of the six Yugoslav republics — were unsure what to do with a gnarling, crouching child found in the woods, so they decided to send him to the central authorities in Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia located in the Serbian republic. For no particular reason, a local official named the boy Harris, which is a common Muslim name in Bosnia.

Cleaned and dressed, but still unable to communicate, Harris began his transformation in a center for abandoned children in Belgrade. He started school and made friends, when after more than four years, authorities in his native Bosnia — now an independent country ravaged by war — sought him back for unknown reasons.

He returned to the chaos, to be picked up to fight by a group of soldiers declaring that “your name is Harris, so you are one of us.”

Rsumovic said he first heard about Harris from the boy’s former mentor in the child care center. The story differed from other feral children tales because it came to symbolize “generations whose lives fell apart along with their country,” Rsumovic said in an interview with The Associated Press.

“No One’s Child” had its Balkan debut at the Zagreb Film Festival in Croatia, where it won the audience award in October.

“It is as if the film tells us that in this region, the only way to survive is to be no one, to be wild,” Croatian film critic Jurica Pavlic wrote.



# INDEPENDENT NEWS FOR THE U.S. MILITARY COMMUNITY

**Whenever They Fight and Wherever They Live**

The first Stars and Stripes was printed during the Civil War, when a band of Union soldiers published a handful of editions.

During World War I, Stars and Stripes reappeared in Paris on February 8, 1918, to serve the doughboys of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), by order of General of the Armies John J. Pershing. An all-military staff produced it weekly until the war's end.

A second renaissance began on April 18, 1942, when a small group of servicemen began publishing a four-page weekly Stars and Stripes in London. They sold each copy for "tuppence" (about 5 cents) and in no time doubled their page count to eight pages, printing daily instead of weekly.

The first World War II edition of Stars and Stripes featured an interview with Gen. George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff. Marshall quoted Gen. Pershing, World War I Commander of the AEF, who described Stars as a major factor in sustaining morale. Stars and Stripes later found a champion and protector in Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander and later president of the United States.

Eisenhower enforced a hands-off policy in regard to Stars and Stripes that continues to the present day.

Operations expanded, following GIs to the battlefield to bring them the news. During the war, Stars and Stripes published over 30

separate editions, running up to 24 pages per issue.

At one time, Stars and Stripes had some 25 printing locations in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and the Pacific. The Pacific edition was launched a week after VE day (Victory in Europe, May 8, 1945).

The war ended—but Stars and Stripes kept going. Its reporters and photographers continued to join American troops in the field, throughout the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, during the 1990s Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and in Bosnia and Kosovo.

From the 2003 outset of Operation Enduring Freedom, Stars and Stripes was there to report first-hand. The war in Afghanistan continues to receive steady coverage. And during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Stripes reporters embedded with military units in Kuwait and Iraq, as well as on Navy ships in the region.

Stars and Stripes today is a multimedia news organization. The majority of Stars and Stripes unique reporting efforts is read now in digital form, either online at [stripes.com](http://stripes.com) or via mobile offerings for iPhone, Android and iPad, in over 200 countries around the world.

The print newspaper is still available for servicemembers, government civilians and their families in

Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific—and in contingency areas. Washington, D.C., hosts the Central office, where daily editions are transmitted to printers in Afghanistan, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Djibouti, as well as in Germany, Italy, UK, Japan, and South Korea. Stars and Stripes also publishes several weeklies (Stripes Guam, Japan, Korea and Okinawa), designed to serve the

needs of their respective military communities.

A U.S. edition comprised exclusively of Stars and Stripes reports from around the world now serves stateside forces and veterans. The U.S. edition is published in partnership with commercial newspaper publishers who serve communities with large military populations.



## STARS AND STRIPES RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE

2014 VFW News Media Award –  
For outstanding contribution to a better understanding of our American way of life and its institutions and interests by honest and forthright reporting.

2013 Military Reporters and Editors Awards –  
Notable Narrative Winner  
Recipient: Laura Rauch

2013 Best American Newspaper Narrative Writing Contest –  
Notable Narrative Winner  
Recipient: Martin Kuz:  
"Soldiers Recount Attack"

2013 National Headline Awards –  
Second Place: News Series  
(Forever After: A Warrior Wounded; A Family Challenged)

2013 min Best of Web: Redesign –  
Honorable Mention  
Stripes UK website

2011 Military Photographer of the Year –  
Honorable Mention  
Recipient: Joshua DeMotts

2011 Sigma Delta Chi Award –  
Breaking News Photography  
(Newspaper Circulation 100,001+ or Affiliated Website/National Magazine) Recipient: Laura Rauch:  
"For those I love I will sacrifice"

2011 John Reagan "Tex" McCrary Award for Excellence in Journalism –  
Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation

2010 Military Reporters and Editors Awards –  
Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)  
Recipient: Jon Rabinoff

2010 National Headliner Awards –  
First Place: Public Service (Forcing Change)  
Third Place: News Series  
(Coming Home: The Men of Triple Deuce)

2009 George Polk Awards in Journalism –  
George Polk Award for Military Reporting  
Recipients: Charlie Reed, Leo Shane III and Kevin Baron

2009 min Editorial & Design Awards –  
Editorial Print /  
Special Supplement: HEROES 2009;  
Custom Publication Design: Stripes GAMER

2007 Military Reporters and Editors Awards –  
Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)  
Recipient: Monte Morin

2006 Military Reporters and Editors Awards –  
Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)  
Recipients: Monte Morin, Joe Giordano;  
Honorable mention: Nancy Montgomery  
Photography: Fred Zimmerman

2005 Military Reporters and Editors Awards –  
Overseas coverage (< 100,000 circulation)  
Recipients: Steve Liewer  
Photography: Terry Boyd

2004 American Legion Excellence in Journalism Award –  
Ground Truth Series

2003 Scripps Howard Foundation National Journalism Award –  
First Amendment, Finalist

WORLD

# Living a double life in Pakistan

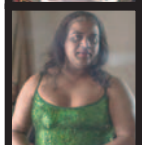
## Cross-dressing men dance despite fear

By MUHAMMED MUHEISEN  
The Associated Press

RAWALPINDI, Pakistan — By day, 27-year-old Waseem Akram sells mobile phone accessories from an alleyway shop in an old neighborhood of this Pakistani city. But by night, Akram stands before a mirror, shaving away his beard and picking through mascara and rouge to become Rani, a female wedding party dancer.

"Life is so hard, one job is not enough to help me and my family," Akram said. "Being a dancer at weddings, parties and private events ... helps me to earn much more money than working in a shop."

Across conservative Pakistan, where Islamic extremists launch near-daily attacks and many follow a strict interpretation of their Muslim faith, male cross-dressers and the transgendered face a challenge of balancing two identities. Some left their villages for the anonymity of a big city, fearing the reactions of their families while still concealing their identity from neighbors and co-workers.



**Amjad Mahmood**

"The only thing that I can't do as a woman is conceive babies."

Male and female roles are clearly defined in Pakistan, and transgender people often face harassment and abuse. One role where they are tolerated is as dancers at weddings and other celebrations at which men and women are strictly segregated. In between the dancing and showers of rupee notes, they must fend off groping from drunken guests.

They can also be seen begging for money in the streets, wearing female dress and makeup.

A 2011 Supreme Court ruling allows the transgendered to get national identity cards recognizing them as neither male nor female and allowing them to vote. Transgendered politicians also have run for office.

For Akram, being Rani means simply cross-dressing.

"I am not transgendered," he said. "I am a man who simply enjoys dancing and need money to have a better life and being a woman is the way."

Others proudly identify as transgender. "I am a very shy man" said Bakhtawar Ijaz, 43. "Eyes always follow me when I walk out of the apartment that I share with a few friends who share the same job like mine (as) dancers.

"Being with them is like being with a family," he said. "When I am surrounded by them, I feel safe, respected and empowered."

Amjad Mahmood, 44, a tailor, proudly identifies as transgender.

"The only thing that I can't do as a woman is conceive babies," Mahmood said.

**Waseem Akram**



PHOTOS BY MUHAMMED MUHEISEN/AP

“ I am not transgendered. I am a man who simply enjoys dancing and need money to have a better life and being a woman is the way.

**Bakhtawar Ijaz**



“ I am a very shy man. Eyes always follow me when I walk out of the apartment that I share with a few friends who share the same job like mine (as) dancers.



# AMERICAN ROUNDUP



JESSICA REILLY, THE (DUBUQUE, IOWA) TELEGRAPH HERALD/AP

## Discovering the joy of books

Abby Stenoish, 5, looks for books at Carnegie-Stout Public Library in Dubuque, Iowa, on Tuesday.

### Breast implant leak delays bigamy trial

**FL** ORLANDO — A trial to determine if U.S. Rep. Alan Grayson's wife committed bigamy when she wed the congressman has been delayed because she required emergency surgery to remove breast implants.

The trial scheduled for Thursday in Orlando is now set for March.

Court papers filed this week say Lolita Grayson had been suffering chest pains. When she went to a hospital to get checked out, she was told she needed emergency surgery to remove the leaking implants and scar tissue.

The surgery was on Monday. Lolita Grayson sued her husband for divorce last year after 24 years of marriage. Alan Grayson claims the marriage was invalid since she was never divorced from her first husband at the time of their union in 1990.

### 5 Disney workers tied to measles outbreak

**CA** ANAHEIM — A recent measles outbreak traced to Disney theme parks in California includes five park employees who were infected, officials said Tuesday.

Of the five employees at Disneyland and Disney California Adventure in Anaheim, three have fully recovered and returned to work, and two remain off, said Dr. Pamela Hymel, the chief medical officer for Walt Disney Parks and Resorts.

### Trial is set for man with bodies in yard

**PA** WILKES-BARRE — A Pennsylvania inmate found at least five sets of human remains buried in his yard nearly a dozen years ago will stand trial on charges he stran-

### THE CENSUS

## \$500K

more than 1,000 grates to scrap-metal dealers. Each grate weighs about 100 pounds and costs about \$475. Police said the Vetrullis sold them for \$9 each.

The value of the more than 1,000 sewer grates allegedly stolen by two brothers from the Philadelphia suburbs and sold for scrap at pennies on the dollar. Police allege that Brian Vetrulli, 36, and John Vetrulli Jr., 38, of Gilbertsville, Pa., stole 13 sewer grates from area parking lots since the beginning of December and had receipts showing they'd sold

gled two of the victims, including a pharmacist who had called the defendant his best friend.

Prosecutors allege Hugo Selenski killed Michael Kerkowski and Kerkowski's girlfriend, Tammy Lynn Fassett, then stole tens of thousands of dollars that Kerkowski had given to his father for safekeeping.

Selenski, 41, has been a household name in northeastern Pennsylvania since 2003, when an informant led authorities to his property north of Wilkes-Barre. There, they found the corpses of Kerkowski and Fassett. Investigators searched the rest of the yard and found additional bodies — at least five and as many as 12 in all.

### Coach accused of biting another coach in face

**GA** MARIETTA — A high school coach in suburban Atlanta is accused of biting another coach's face.

An arrest warrant said South Cobb High School girls basketball coach Melonie Joyce Martin was standing about two inches from coach Tyrone Harris when authorities said she bit him in the eye and nose.

Martin's attorney, S. Carlton Rouse, told WSB-TV Martin denied touching Harris and never threatened his safety.

Authorities said the confrontation happened inside a school office Jan. 9 after the South Cobb girls team lost to Campbell High School.

### Woman gives birth on flight from Jordan

**NY** NEW YORK — Airport officials say a 33-year-old woman gave birth to a baby girl on a flight to New York from Jordan.

A spokesman for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey said a nurse and doctor on the flight helped deliver the baby.

Joe Pantangelo said the baby weighed 6 pounds and 5 ounces. It was born over the Atlantic aboard Royal Jordanian Flight J261 around 5 p.m. Tuesday.

### Man accused of driving stolen military Humvee

**AL** COLUMBIANA — The vehicle description called in to the Shelby County Sheriff's Office was unusual: a military Humvee being driven on the wrong side of a county road late Friday night with no headlights.

Shelby County sheriff's deputies said they stopped the vehicle around 11 p.m. They said they determined that the Humvee had been stolen from a U.S. Army Reserve station in Birmingham.

Sheriff's officials said the Humvee driver — Jacob Russell Durant, 19, of Alabaster, Ala. — was arrested during the traffic stop and charged with receiving stolen property.

The Humvee was released to the 5th Medical Brigade, Army Reserve Unit in Birmingham.

### Police: DVD player used to hit woman in face

**NE** NORFOLK — Police said a 29-year-old woman from Norfolk is in custody after hitting another person in the face with a DVD player and scratching officers who tried to arrest her.

The Norfolk Daily News reported officers were dispatched to an apartment building Sunday night.

When they arrived, officers said they found the 29-year-old being pinned down by a second woman. Police told the second woman to get off the 29-year-old, and when she did, officers said, the 29-year-old struck her with a DVD player that was on the ground.

Police tried to handcuff the 29-year-old, who they say struggled and resisted officers' attempts to take her into custody.

### 15 tons of bio-solids spill into creek

**WA** BLEWETT PASS — A truck hauling bio-solids from a sewage treatment plant overturned on an icy patch of Highway 97 at Blewett Pass and spilled 15 tons of the clumpy waste into Swack Creek, officials said.

The driver was shaken but not injured in the accident early Monday on the way from Woodinville to a farm in Douglas County.

By early Tuesday, all the bio-solids that could be cleaned up had been removed by a vacuum truck, said Jessie Israel, of King

County's Wastewater Treatment Division.

### Police: Woman robbed store with toddler in cab

**DE** WILMINGTON — Delaware State Police have arrested a woman they say took a cab to and from a convenience store robbery and left her 1-year-old daughter in the cab during the crime.

Troopers said a woman indicated she had a handgun and demanded money from a clerk.

Police said the clerk gave the woman money, and the suspect fled in a yellow minivan cab. Officers found the taxi and the driver, who did not know what had happened in the store.

### Puppeteer arrested on child porn charges

**FL** PINELLAS PARK — A Gulf Coast puppeteer who made a living entertaining children was arrested on child pornography charges.

Pinellas County Sheriff's detectives said Peter Douglas Emr, 34, possessed hundreds of pornographic images of children.

Emr, who performed under the stage name "Emr the Jester," was arrested Tuesday on six counts of possession of child pornography and three counts of sexual performance with intent to promote. He's being held on \$320,000 bail at the Pinellas County Jail.

From wire reports



# FACES



Jennifer Aniston, left, and Sam Worthington star in the movie "Cake." Many were surprised Aniston wasn't nominated for an Academy Award for best actress for her role.

## Aniston talks Oscar snub, Razzie nom and acting cred

BY MIKE CIDONI LENNOX  
The Associated Press

**Y**es, Jennifer Aniston would like to thank the academy. But it won't be this year.

At long last, many critics saw Aniston fulfill potential first revealed in 2002's art-house hit "The Good Girl" in an even darker, more daring role in the drama "Cake," in which she plays a drug-addicted woman in chronic physical and emotional pain.

That performance earned the "Friends" star Golden Globe and Critics' Choice nominations, and this weekend, Aniston's performance also is up for a Screen Actors Guild award.

But the motion picture academy passed her by when it announced its nominations last week.

On the day after failing to receive the Oscar nomination, the 45-year-old Aniston was promoting "Cake," which opens in the U.S. today, while sitting just inches away from a poster touting her "Oscar-worthy performance."

"Well, there's 'Oscar-worthy,'" the actress said, with a grin. "The truth is, this movie hasn't even come out yet," she continued. "I feel so lucky that any of that has even happened on a movie that we started shooting not even a year ago. We started April 3rd of last year. I couldn't ask for more than that."

But she has gotten at least a little bit more: The Golden Raspberry Foundation, best known for its loving slams of bad cinema with The Razzies, revealed a softer



**It's been 25 years that I've been lucky enough to make a living doing what I love to do. So, to keep having surprises and to keep surprising myself is so exciting. And I just want to do more of that."**



side last week when it announced a new category, the Razzie Redeemer Award, honoring former Razzie regulars who now are doing work worth applauding.

Aniston is a Redeemer Award nominee, thanks to her work in "Cake."

"That's so nice," she said, sincerely. "You get a Nice Razzie."

While never a winner, Aniston is a four-time Razzie nominee, primarily for roles in her string of generally poorly reviewed, but often commercially successful, romantic comedies.

Aniston, whose filmography is overwhelmingly rom-com-heavy, said she wasn't surprised when "Cake" director Daniel Barnz asked her to read for the emotionally complex role of Claire Simmons.

"You start to lose trust in yourself that you can do something such as that," Aniston explained. "So you actually start to say, 'Does the industry actually know something that I don't know? Can I do this?'"

Aniston gets to give at least one acceptance speech for her performance in "Cake." Just a week after Sunday's SAG Awards, the actress will head some 90 miles north of Hollywood to accept the Santa Barbara International Film Festival's Montecito Award.

"It's been 25 years that I've been lucky enough to make a living doing what I love to do," Aniston said. "So, to keep having surprises and to keep surprising myself is so exciting. And I just want to do more of that."



CHARLES SYKES, INVISION/AP

New Kids on the Block members, from left, Joey McIntyre, Danny Wood, Donnie Wahlberg, Jordan Knight and Jonathan Knight announced the band's The Main Event tour at Madison Square Garden on Tuesday in New York.

## Boy band: New acts can learn from us

The Associated Press

New Kids on the Block are ready to take new boy bands on the block to school.

The Boston-based veteran group, which announced a summer tour with TLC and Nelly this week, said contemporary boy bands should check out their live concerts to learn from the experts.

"As far as boy bands, you know, we dance, we perform. I mean, I hate to sound like an old fogey, but these kids don't know what they're missing nowadays because we got to sing and dance for our supper, you know what I mean, and we love to do that," Joey McIntyre, 42, said in an interview Tuesday at Madison Square Garden in New York City. "So maybe a few kids could come to the show and see how it's done."

The Main Event tour kicks off May 1 in Las Vegas. Tickets go on sale Jan. 31.

In the past few years, boy bands have resurged, with One Direction leading the pack, followed by 5 Seconds of Summer. Others, from The Wanted to Mindless Behavior, have had some success.

Donnie Wahlberg, 45, said the decades-long bond between New Kids on the Block and their fans makes it worthwhile.

"I would rather have the credibility of thousands of fans and have them be happy. That's what we've learned and that's why we're still here," Wahlberg said. "We keep it alive because it stays alive between us and our fans. It's a real relationship now."

Wahlberg and McIntyre, along with bandmates Danny Wood and brothers Jordan and Jonathan Knight, began playing together more than 30 years ago.

### Bob Dylan says he would be a teacher

Bob Dylan says if he weren't a musician, he would be a teacher.

The 73-year-old is on the cover of AARP magazine's February/March issue. He says in an interview that "if I had to do it all over again, I'd be a school teacher." He adds that he "probably" would have taught Roman history or theology.

Dylan will release "Shadows In the Night" on Feb. 3. The album features songs from the 1920s to the 1960s, including standards like "Autumn Leaves," "That Lucky Old Sun" and "Stay With Me." The songs also were recorded by Frank Sinatra. Dylan says he thinks Sinatra would "be amazed I did these songs with a five-piece band."

Dylan is giving 50,000 readers of the magazine a free copy of his album.

### 'Saved by the Bell' actor pleads not guilty

The actor who played Screech in the 1990s TV show "Saved by the Bell" has pleaded not guilty to charges resulting from a bar fight in Wisconsin.

Dustin Diamond and his fiancée, Amanda Schutz, appeared in Ozaukee County Circuit Court Thursday on charges stemming from the Christmas Day scuffle at a Port Washington bar. Diamond is accused of stabbing a man after Schutz became involved in an altercation. The stabbed man told police he had shoved Diamond and didn't realize he had been cut until later.

Diamond, 38, pleaded not guilty to second-degree reckless endangering safety, a felony, and two misdemeanors. Schutz entered the same plea to misdemeanor disorderly conduct. Diamond has been free on bond. The judge set a \$500 signature bond for Schutz.

### Other news

■ Jazz greats Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock are planning a 2015 world tour of duo piano concerts, kicking off March 14 in Seattle.

■ Anne Hathaway will be playing an Air Force fighter pilot in a one-woman stage show. The Public Theater in New York said Wednesday that the Academy Award-winner will star in George Brant's play "Grounded" starting April 7. It's about a pilot who is reassigned to operate a military drone.

■ Ariana Grande will headline the NBA All-Star halftime show Feb. 15 event at Madison Square Garden.

## FAITH

## SACRED CALLING

## Nuns provide free hospice care to cancer patients

By KRISTEN A. GRAHAM  
The Philadelphia Inquirer

It is called Sacred Heart Home, and its work is just that — sacred.

For 84 years, a group of nuns has been caring for poor people dying from cancer in their gleaming home on the edge of Hunting Park, Pa. They do it free of charge.

The Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne accept no payment of any kind from patients, insurance companies or the government. Though its sisters are Roman Catholic, Sacred Heart receives no funding stream from any diocese or church.

"Isn't that a miracle?" asked Sister Mary de Paul Mullen, Sacred Heart's nursing director. "We rely totally on the providence of God to exist."

Technically, Sacred Heart is a 35-bed skilled nursing facility. Practically, patient Eileen Rugh said, it is more — a place where the cheerful nuns take care of her as tenderly as though she were family, a place far less grim than she imagined when she heard the word hospice.

"We don't talk about death here," said Rugh, who has Stage 4 lung cancer. "We just talk about today, and today's a pretty good day."

The work is inspired by Rose Hawthorne Lathrop, daughter of the 19th-century writer Nathaniel Hawthorne and a convert to Catholicism. After learning about a New York seamstress who died in a poorhouse for lack of cancer care, Lathrop was moved to act.

"A fire was then lit in my heart, where it still burns," she wrote. "I set my whole being to endeavor to bring consolation to the cancerous poor."

Lathrop took a nursing course, rented a cold-water flat on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, and began doing just that in 1896. Eventually, she became a nun, took the name Mother Alphonsa,



Top right: Sacred Heart Home in the Hunting Park neighborhood of Philadelphia, where since 1930 the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne have cared for people at the end of their lives.

Above: Sister Mary Barbara Randolph wheels resident Marie Ramos into the community room at Sacred Heart.

Left: The home also features a sanctuary in the chapel.

PHOTOS BY TOM GRALISKI, PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/TNS

admissions criteria, and most patients are not Catholic.

Some residents come to Sacred Heart from homeless shelters or prisons. Some have family who visit daily, and others have no one. Some stay for a month, some stay for a year or more. They are the people who would otherwise fall through the cracks, the sisters say.

To gain admission, patients must have stopped treatment for cancer. The focus is palliative care, pain control, comfort.

Sacred Heart patients are provided with medications and daily whirlpool baths, social services, laundry, barber and beautician services. A doctor makes regular visits. There is entertainment, too, games and music for the people well enough to enjoy them.

On a recent day, a singer crooned holiday standards to residents who gathered in a lounge to smile and sway a little.

Leo Venkuss, 88, sat at a table, nursing a cup of coffee and waiting for the singing to start.

Venkuss, a gregarious retired insurance salesman from North Philadelphia who has lung cancer, came to Sacred Heart a few months ago.

"This is a hell of a place," he said approvingly. "I'm very satisfied. There's entertainment, it's clean, the food is good, the staff is friendly."

Down the hall, Rugh sat in her warm, immaculate room, adorned like the rest of the home with colorful Christmas decorations. Rugh, who has lived at Sacred Heart for eight months, relaxed on a green leather recliner topped with a fuzzy brown blanket. She marvels daily, she said, at the sisters who provide her one-on-one care.

"They always say, 'Whatever you need,'" said Rugh, 59. "They keep your spirits up. It's gorgeous, and everything is in abundance." The sisters work hard to ensure that.

"It's not home, but we hope it's the next best thing," Sister Mary de Paul said. "And for some peo-

Some residents come to Sacred Heart from homeless shelters or prisons. Some have family who visit daily, and others have no one. Some stay for a month, some stay for a year or more. They are the people who would otherwise fall through the cracks, the sisters say.

ple, it's better than home."

Sacred Heart does not smell like a hospital, and though the trappings of illness and death are always present, they do not dominate.

The home was magnificent for Christmas last year. But it always shines, from the polished wooden chair rails that line the hallways to the garden that conveys peace amid physical pain and the bustle of the gritty neighborhood.

That's important to Rich Tenaglia, a maintenance man who for 28 years has tended to the garden's lovely plants, flowers, and shrubs.

"It is hard work, but very fulfilling," Tenaglia said.

For the holiday season, his focus shifts entirely to filling the home with elaborate decorations — trees, angels, wreaths, poinsettias, a gorgeous carved Nativity scene.

"A lot of them won't be here next Christmas," Tenaglia said. "We want(ed) it to be special for them."

Sacred Heart has a small endowment, Sister Mary de Paul said, built up over years of donations large and small, bequests from wills and contributions made in memory of former patients. Sometimes it feels daunting making the place run, she said, with payroll, medication insurance and other expenses.

Occasionally, a patient's family member tries to send a check in gratitude for the care their loved one received. That goes against Lathrop's wishes.

"We have to send it back," Sister Mary de Paul said. "It drives people crazy."

# BUSINESS/WEATHER

## Google to sell wireless phone service

The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — Google is planning to sell wireless phone service directly to consumers using the networks of Sprint and T-Mobile, according to reports published Wednesday.

If everything falls into place, Google Inc. could offer discounted wireless data plans that would pressure other major carriers to offer better deals and services or risk losing customers to a powerful rival.

More affordable plans, in turn, could bring

more people online, something that Google is trying to do because it runs the Internet's dominant search engine and largest advertising network. The Mountain View, Calif., company would profit from a potentially larger audience for its services.

Google also implants its services into its Android mobile operating system, the mostly widely used software on smartphones.

Both the technology news site The Information and The Wall Street Journal reported Google's intention to become a wireless ser-

vice provider. The reports cited unnamed people familiar with the matter.

Representatives from Google, Sprint Corp. and T-Mobile U.S. declined to comment on the reports.

It's unclear how widely Google plans to sell wireless plans to smartphone owners or when the service would launch. The company already is selling an ultra-fast Internet and cable TV service directly to homes, but that Google Fiber product so far is available only in parts of Kansas City, Kan.; Kansas City, Mo.; Provo, Utah; and Austin, Texas.

Google's plans to make its entry into the wireless Internet market by buying access on the networks of Sprint and T-Mobile is known as a mobile virtual network operator, or MVNO, agreement. Google probably will still have to set up its own operations to handle customer service and billing, an area in which the company doesn't have much previous expertise.

Leasing space to Google represents a calculated risk by Sprint, the third-largest wireless carrier, and T-Mobile, the fourth-largest.

While a deal with Google figures to boost their revenue, it also opens the door for a deep-pocketed company that could turn into a competitive threat.

### EUROPE GAS PRICES

Country	Super E10	Super unleaded	Super plus	Diesel
Germany	\$2.89	\$2.90	\$2.76	\$3.26
Change in price	-7.3 cents	-8.1 cents	-8 cents	-12 cents
Netherlands	--	\$3.350	\$3.602	\$3.568
Change in price	--	-8.6 cents	-9.1 cents	-13 cents
U.K.	--	\$2.550	\$2.746	\$3.206
Change in price	--	-8.1 cents	-8 cents	-12 cents
Azores	--	--	\$3.635	--
Change in price	--	--	-5.1 cents	--
Belgium	--	\$2.421	\$3.347	\$2.950
Change in price	--	No change	No change	No change
Turkey	--	--	\$3.495	\$3.755
Change in price	--	--	-12.3 cents	No change
Italy	\$3.074	--	--	\$4.050
Change in price	No change	--	--	No change

\* Diesel E10 \*\* Midgrade

For the week of Jan. 24-30

### MARKET WATCH

Jan. 21, 2015

Dow Jones Industrials	+39.05
17,554.28	
Nasdaq composite	+12.58
4,667.42	
Standard & Poor's 500	+9.57
2,032.12	
Russell 2000	-4.00
1,166.25	

### EXCHANGE RATES

Millitary rates	
Euro costs (Jan. 23)	\$1.1936
Dollar buys (Jan. 23)	60.8385
British pound (Jan. 23)	\$1.56
Japanese yen (Jan. 23)	115.00
South Korean won (Jan. 23)	1,058.00

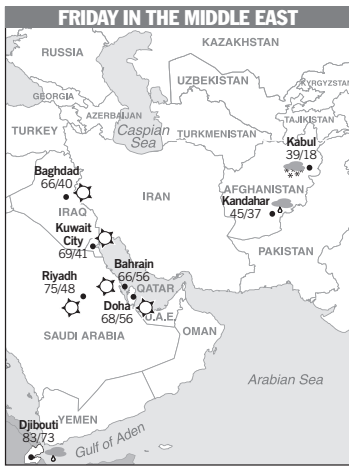
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.5124
Canada (dollar)	1.2348
China (Yuan)	6.2083
Denmark (Krone)	6.4147
Egypt (Pound)	7.5455
Hong Kong (Dollar)	\$1.1591/0.8628
Hungary (Forint)	272.29
Israel (Shekel)	3.9372
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	117.84
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.2940
Norway (Krone)	1.0649
Philippines (Peso)	4.71
Poland (Zloty)	33.34
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7573
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3359
South Korea (Won)	1,084.99
Switzerland (Franc)	0.8605
Thailand (Baht)	32.58
Turkey (Lira)	2.3513

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonlocal currency exchange rates (i.e., rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

### INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	3.25
Discount rate	1.18
Federal funds market rate	0.12
3-month bill	0.03
30-year bond	2.46

## WEATHER OUTLOOK



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

### Friday's US temperatures

City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr	City	Hi	Lo	Wthr
Ablene, Tex	47	27	Cldy	Chatanooga	44	37	Rain	Fort Wayne	36	21	PCldy	Louisville	41	27	Cldy
Akron, Ohio	34	22	PCldy	Cheyenne	41	20	Cldy	Fresno	56	42	Cldy	Lubbock	38	18	Cldy
Albany, N.Y.	33	18	PCldy	Chicago	37	24	PCldy	Goodland	48	18	PCldy	Macon	47	43	Rain
Albuquerque	41	17	Cldy	Cincinnati	41	25	Cldy	Grand Junction	37	12	PCldy	Madison	38	22	PCldy
Allentown, Pa.	34	19	PCldy	Cleveland	34	22	PCldy	Grand Rapids	38	21	PCldy	Medford	56	38	Cldy
Anchorage	25	20	Snow	Colorado Springs	43	13	PCldy	Great Falls	45	30	Cldy	Memphis	37	25	Snow
Asheville	36	31	Cldy	Columbia, S.C.	44	40	Rain	Greensboro, N.C.	40	32	Rain	Midland-Odesa	43	25	PCldy
Atlanta	43	41	Rain	Columbus, Ga.	50	45	Rain	Hartford	37	32	PCldy	Milwaukee	37	22	PCldy
Atlantic City	38	20	Cldy	Concord, N.H.	29	14	PCldy	Hartford Spring	42	37	Rain	Mpls-St Paul	48	24	Cldy
Austin	48	35	Cldy	Corpus Christi	54	45	Cldy	Helena	39	21	PCldy	Missoula	37	23	Cldy
Baltimore	40	25	PCldy	Dallas-Ft. Worth	48	35	Cldy	Honolulu	92	67	Cldy	Montgomery	54	47	Rain
Baton Rouge	48	40	Rain	Dayton	38	23	PCldy	Houston	52	41	Cldy	Nashville	40	35	Snow
Bilings	42	29	PCldy	Denver	78	58	Rain	Huntsville	44	38	Rain	New Orleans	49	44	Rain
Birmingham	46	42	Rain	Des Moines	45	18	PCldy	Indianapolis	41	23	PCldy	New York City	36	24	Cldy
Blackrock	40	29	PCldy	Detroit	31	20	Cldy	Jackson, Miss.	44	40	Rain	Newark	37	23	Cldy
Boise	36	24	PCldy	Duluth	36	21	Cldy	Janeau	42	37	Rain	Norfolk, Va.	45	33	Cldy
Boston	34	22	Cldy	El Paso	43	26	Cldy	Kansas City	47	23	Cldy	North Platte	51	17	PCldy
Bridgeport	34	20	Cldy	Elkins	39	21	Cldy	Key West	72	67	PCldy	San Antonio	68	28	PCldy
Brownsville	55	48	Cir	Erie	32	19	PCldy	Knoxville	42	33	Rain	San Diego	71	51	Cldy
Buffalo	32	20	Cldy	Eugene	55	44	Cldy	Lake Charles	47	44	Cldy	San Francisco	63	49	Rain
Burlington, Vt.	30	18	Cldy	Evansville	38	27	Cldy	Lansing	37	21	PCldy	Paducah	36	29	Snow
Caribou, Maine	18	1	Cldy	Fairbanks	11	-21	Cir	Las Vegas	62	37	PCldy	Pendleton	43	30	Cldy
Charleston, S.C.	43	20	Cldy	Fargo	38	27	Cldy	Lexington	40	26	Snow	Phoenix	52	22	PCldy
Charleston, W.Va.	53	43	Rain	Flagstaff	43	15	PCldy	Lincoln	52	22	PCldy	Philadelphia	36	25	Cldy
Charlotte, N.C.	45	27	Cldy	Flint	31	18	Cldy	Little Rock	41	34	Snow	Phoenix	67	44	Cldy
	41	36	Rain	Fort Smith	48	32	Cldy	Los Angeles	78	52	Cir	Pittsburgh	35	22	PCldy

### National temperature extremes

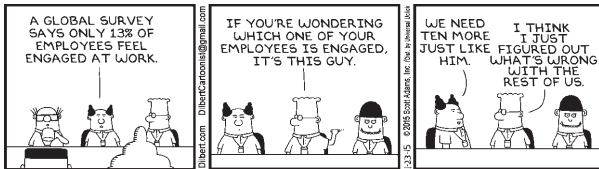
Hi: Wed., 85, West Kendall	Tamiami
Rain: Airport, Fla.	
Lo: Wed., -18, Grand Marais	Mich.



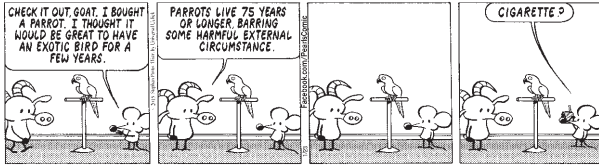
Frazz



Dilbert



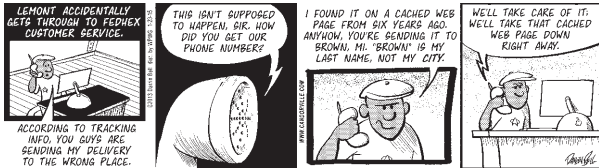
Pearls Before Swine



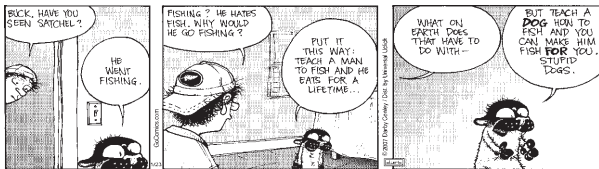
Non Sequitur



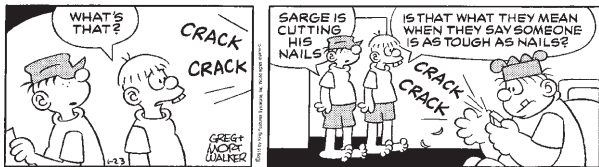
Candorville



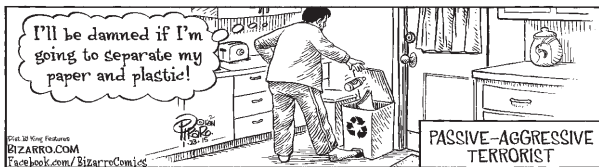
Get Fuzzy



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



## Eugene Sheffer Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12					13			14		
15					16			17		
21	22			23				24		
25				26		27	28			
29				30		31		32	33	34
38	39	40				41		42		43
44					45			46		
47				48				49		50
52				53				54		
55				56				57		

### ACROSS

- 1 Toronto Maple —
- 6 "The Talk" airt
- 9 Cleopatra's slay-

- er
- 12 Confuse
- 13 Actress Lucy
- 14 Hot tub
- 15 Made on a loom
- 16 Gave counsel
- 18 Mass departure
- 20 See to
- 21 Evergreen type
- 23 Scale members
- 24 Disheveled
- 25 Cold War weap-
- on
- 27 Cut at an angle
- 29 Having more on
- one's plate
- 31 Fly
- 35 Medal or trophy
- 37 Leading man?
- 38 Talk a blue
- streak?
- 41 Slithery swimmer
- 43 Biden, Cheney,
- etc.
- 44 Cheese choice
- 45 Abrasion
- 47 Move ahead
- 49 Fender benders
- 52 Witness
- 53 W. Hemisphere
- grp.
- 54 Bar legally

### DOWN

- 1 Legislation
- 2 Tokyo's old name
- 3 Many end with "ly"
- 4 Bend
- 5 Man of La Mancha
- 6 Contract section
- 7 Actions at auc-
- tions
- 8 Explorer or
- Pathfinder
- 9 No liability
- 10 Exhausted
- 11 Rice field
- 17 Roma's country
- 19 Winger or

- Messing
- 21 Teeny tale
- 22 Hosp. area
- 24 Gun the engine
- 26 Unhealthy atm-
- sphere
- 28 Skywalker's pop
- 30 Lamb's dam
- 32 Beginnings
- 33 Spigot
- 34 Type measures
- 36 Niche
- 38 Stop
- 39 Milk dispenser
- 40 Delirious one
- 42 Burdened
- 45 Wound cover
- 46 Tower city
- 48 San Francisco's
- Hill
- 50 Understood
- 51 Bond, for one

### Answer to Previous Puzzle

S	T	O	P	M	A	N	U	M	B	O
L	I	R	A	A	L	E	L	A	R	D
I	D	E	M	L	A	M	S	L	E	D
M	Y	O	P	I	A	O	C	T	A	D
			A	T	M		P	E	P	
A	I	M	S	U	N	M	A	R	R	E
B	R	A	T	T	I	A	O	R	E	
C	A	L	D	W	E	L	L	O	P	A
			A	R	E		A	M	P	
I	N	D	E	E	D	G	O	E	T	H
R	A	I	N	A	B	A	N	A	I	L
O	P	E	C	W	A	S	E	X	E	S
N	A	S	H	N	A	Y	R	I	S	E

1-23

CRYPTOQUIP

BSV KRTD CRW'OV MIQBBVT

QKT'B TVJIAC ARTD VTRWDS.

MSVT Q SVJIL QB Q SJL JT

JLL-OVIKV IVJFBQRT.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: TO LOOK AT THE WORLD AS SHAKESPEARE DID, ONE PROBABLY NEEDS TO HAVE A BARD'S-EYE VIEW.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Q equals I

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Ernie Gates

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR/OPINION

## Can't cherry-pick Bill of Rights

Regarding Bloomberg News columnist Francis Wilkinson's Jan. 15 column ("Many gun owners put children at risk": Wilkinson and former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg are the Henny Pennys for the anti-gun movement, and they use Machiavellian tactics to further their agenda.

Their sources (Everytown for Gun Safety and Moms Demand Action For Gun Sense in America) prove that criminals don't care about gun laws: Of the "at least 100 children [who] died in unintentional shootings ... from December 2012 to December 2013," 33 of the shootings involved illegal guns in the hands of criminals. Moral cowardice and sensationalism are the backbone of their beliefs; they will do anything to push their agenda.

Wilkinson and Bloomberg are skilled carpetbaggers who enjoy practicing and honing their skills at others' expense, lying

## Tell us what you think

Stars and Stripes welcomes your comments on editorials and columns that are published in the newspaper, and values letters on topics of importance in the lives of our readers. All letters must be signed, and must include the writer's address or base and telephone number. Please limit all letters to 300 words. We reserve the right to edit letters for length, taste and clarity. To write us, please refer to the Reader letters information on this page.

in wait to exploit another family tragedy. The death of a child is tragic, but to exploit that tragedy is wrong.

Wilkinson enjoys his First Amendment freedoms of speech and the press; he would attack any group that tried to subvert those rights. However, Wilkinson finds it annoying that a majority of Americans exercise and support their Second Amendment rights and fails to realize that it wasn't

for the Second Amendment he wouldn't have those First Amendment rights.

Washington, D.C., and California have some of the toughest gun laws in the country, yet they have high rates of gun-related murders and crime. Wilkinson thinks that law-abiding gun owners are just paranoid, but a study conducted by Florida State University criminologist Gary Kleck shows guns are used 2.5 million times a year in self-defense. Twice as many children are killed playing football than are murdered by guns and more children will die in a car, drown in a pool, or choke on food than they will by firearms. Gun Owners of America reports that children are at a 2,000 percent greater risk from the car in the driveway than from the gun in their parents' closet.

Wilkinson is the Baron Munchausen of gun control, and the cure is an old-fashioned remedy called reality.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Robert Miller  
Kuwait

## Cuba not yet ready for a democratic revolution

By NOAH FELDMAN  
Bloomberg News

It's the eve of the U.S. invasion of Havana — and it's legal to bring back cigars now. But souvenirs aside, is anything changing in Cuba after the U.S.'s diplomatic opening and Cuba's release of 53 political prisoners? I spent the last four days in Havana, fortuitously arriving the day the new U.S. regulations kicked in. On the basis of thoroughly unsystematic conversations with Cuban-Americans who do business there, government officials and artists, the answer is: not yet.

Sure, the anti-American propaganda billboards, ubiquitous a decade ago, have been replaced by pictures of smiling children and in one case, a celebration of repatriated Cuban spies. But if change is coming, it will arrive gradually. And that, surprisingly enough, may be a good thing.

Begin with the most important fact about the U.S.-Cuba rapprochement. It isn't based on any commitment by Cuban President Raul Castro to change the country's distinctive political system. Americans who pay casual attention to the Cuba question might assume that President Barack Obama's initiative resulted from some signal that the Castro government is ready to loosen its commitment to state-owned enterprise and single-party governance.

Yet that isn't the case, at least not publicly. The release of political prisoners is a good thing in and of itself, but it doesn't cover for the Obama administration's laxness on those aspects of the U.S. embargo that the executive branch can control. But releasing political prisoners isn't inconsistent with continuing state socialism. The Obama initiative was driven by a realist foreign policy assessment that U.S. interests would be served by relaxing and eventually repealing the embargo — not by liberal internationalism.

A further optimistic thought that needs cold water thrown on it is the idea that American tourists and investments will swamp traditional socialist opposition and bring Cuba into the capitalist world economy nowhere near ready for an influx of U.S. tourism — and won't be anytime soon. Compared with a decade ago, there are more paladares — privately owned restaurants that cater to foreigners. A number of them, such as El Cocinero and Rio Mar, would be elegant stands in any city on earth. But the infrastructure for major tourism is lacking. Perhaps in time Cuba might experiment with out-of-town beachfront hotels, but no one is talking about them with any specificity quite yet. For now, the downtown hotels remain few, and many visitors stay in rented rooms — charming yet inadequate for scaled tourism.



DESMOND BOYLAN/AP

A woman arranges items at a souvenir shop for tourists in Old Havana, Cuba, on Jan. 15. Tens of thousands more American tourists are expected to flock to Cuba this year.

As for investments, even if the U.S. embargo were to be withdrawn by Congress, American investors would have to navigate the arcane, opaque politics of the Cuban government to obtain necessary licenses and permissions. To survive for more than half a century, the Cuban system evolved a complex political ecosystem that is exceedingly difficult for outsiders to negotiate. Those who administer it haven't manifested the will or desire to give up their influence. Rationally, one would expect Cuban leaders to seek profitable opportunities for their people and perhaps themselves. But this would entail the risk of giving up influence — and the Cuban leadership certainly knows it.

All this may sound gloomy — and it's certainly no fun to be pessimistic about such a unique country. But the story isn't all depressing. In fact, gradualism rather than revolution may be exactly what Cuba needs.

Of course human rights abuses should be reversed and free expression expanded. That's why the freeing of political prisoners is a positive step. But when it comes to Cuba's economic development, slow progress is preferable to radical transformation. The same is true of political evolution; moving too fast might not produce greater freedom, but actually the opposite.

Consider the structural economic problem that has plagued other Caribbean nations. Agricultural exports can be an important economic driver, but too great a dependence renders an economy subservient to fluctuating commodity prices — and can stand in the way of value-added exports. Tourism can bring foreign capital and improve trade balances. But the jobs it generates are mostly menial. It can't drive neo-imperial or neocolonial attitudes

on the part of richer countries as local populations come to be seen primarily in terms of their ability to serve. What's more, tourism is highly dependent on economic forces outside a nation's own control. Going slow may enable Cuba to target its tourism industry at higher value, cultural tourism rather than beachfront holiday packages — which would probably be much better for Cuba in the long run.

One positive effect of the socialist revolution has been Cuba's investment in human capital. Its education system is better than that of comparable countries, and it boasts that it's a net exporter of physicians and nurses. It may not be realistic for Cuba to generate millions of high-paying jobs quickly. But selective foreign investors could identify and take advantage of the skilled parts of Cuba's workforce — thereby generating better jobs than are characteristic of most island economies.

In politics, Russia and Egypt serve to remind us that rapid change can produce radical instability and lead back to a barely updated version of the old regime. If the Cuban government were to announce free and fair elections tomorrow, there would be no political infrastructure to accommodate the development — and political disaster could well follow. Democracy remains as important a desideratum as ever. To paraphrase Winston Churchill, it's still the worst form of government, except for all the others. But getting to democracy is a process, not an event. Cuba may well get there eventually. But by taking its time, it may be able to avoid some of the flaws that democracy is known to bring — and to make the best of Cuba's socialist legacy.

Noah Feldman, a Bloomberg View columnist, is a professor of constitutional and international law at Harvard and the author of "Cool War: The Future of Global Competition."

## OPINION

## What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Free speech still has risks  
The (Gainesville, Ga.) Times

The idea of free speech embodied into the U.S. Constitution 225 years ago remains an elusive goal ever under attack and in need of a diligent defense. Even as we Americans often don't fully grasp its scope and meaning, what we hold as a fundamental right isn't always acknowledged everywhere.

We have seen this play out in recent unrelated events, each of which follows a thread to ponder: Free expression isn't a given, and where it exists, its consequences can be sobering. And the way government interacts with this exchange is vital to preserving that liberty.

Earlier this month, Islamic extremists attacked the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, killing 12 people in retaliation for the publication's caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad. It was the latest violent act from zealots unwilling to accept beliefs outside of their own.

Thousands worldwide offered support for Charlie and all publications that take on sacred cows, though many still feel the magazine went beyond good taste in poking fun at others' beliefs. There are advances in the society, the more willing it is to endure a wider range of ideas under the umbrella of freedom, even when those views may cross the line of decorum.

But unpopular ideas can carry risk. It's up to those who express them to decide if it's worth the risk. There remains a distinction in whether one can express something legally, and whether one should. The former is protected by law; the latter is up to our discretion. With all rights come the responsibility to use them wisely.

Pope Francis even weighed in on this with the view that ridiculing faith falls beyond the boundary of free expression. While we blanch at that notion, remember he's a man of beliefs, not the law, so his domain is over what we "should" do and not what we "can."

Those who defend the right to be offensive within the full gamut of free expression understand why "can" is of utmost importance. The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution begins, "Congress shall make no law..." restricting our ability to gather, speak, write or believe without government interference.

Yet government can shield us from the results of our free expression only to a point. There's no bubble of protection from all of the consequences it incurs.

An incident close to home shed light on a different aspect of the topic. Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed fired Police Chief Kelvin Cochran over a book the chief wrote that included Cochran's ideas on homosexuality. Reed claims Cochran violated city rules for not following the proper procedures to approve his book. Cochran and his backers claim he is being discriminated against for his religious views.

Is anyone entitled to opine that Reed "shouldn't" have fired Cochran, but as the boss, he certainly "can"? ... If you stand in the middle of the office and espouse offensive views, you'll likely be shown the door. You won't be thrown in jail; the First Amendment protects your choice to speak, but it doesn't promise you a job.

There are laws against workplace discrimination targeting skin color, gender or physical disability, factors beyond anyone's control. But expression of beliefs is a choice. If you don't like your employer stating your views, you're free to work elsewhere.



EREN LUKATSKY/AP

Ukrainians wrapped in their national flags stand on a bridge to form a human chain across the road of the Dniro River, which is supposed to symbolize unity of western and eastern Ukraine, to mark National Unity Day in Kiev, Ukraine, on Thursday.

Cochran's supporters are among those pushing for a bill in the Georgia legislature that would support religious freedom in the workplace. One of the ideas behind it may be the backlash over the Affordable Care Act mandate that companies must provide birth control prescription coverage even if it contradicts their faith.

Here is a case where the government may be taking sides in the consequences of free speech. The ACA requirement already was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court last year. The laws created in reaction to it may not hold up, either, depending on what behaviors they address.

The bottom line here is that the First Amendment keeps the government from intervening on matters of faith or speech unless it endangers someone (yelling "fire!" in a crowd, for instance). And as long as those 45 words remain in effect, additional laws affirming the right to believe as we wish, at work or anywhere else, do not seem necessary.

It's also worth noting free expression of faith in the workplace is a concept many may endorse when the beliefs match their own, but not as much when it involves someone else's. We can't have it both ways; if religious freedom doesn't apply to all, no one is free.

Lashing out at Saudis' tactics  
Los Angeles Times

A blogger in Saudi Arabia who was convicted of insulting Islam and sentenced to 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes received his first 50 lashes by cane in a public square this month. His second round of lashing was postponed after a doctor found that he had yet to heal from the first.

The cruel, retrograde punishment of Raif Badawi has drawn worldwide condemnation, and Amnesty International has deemed him a prisoner of conscience and called for his release. Badawi's "crime" was operating a now-defunct blog, the Free Saudi Liberal Network, which fostered political and social debate over Islam and liberalism.

Badawi wrote about whether those two concepts were compatible, critiqued the religious police and ran posts by others critical of Saudi institutions. That initially got him jailed in 2011, with a written postscript renunciation of his religion — which is punishable by death in Saudi Arabia. In 2013, he was found guilty of the lesser charges of insulting Islam and violating the information technology laws. On appeal, he was sentenced to 10 years in prison and 1,000 lashes.

The right to freedom of expression is not

some peculiar American obsession. It is a universal human right, and those who exercise it should neither be killed by terrorists nor imprisoned by their governments. It's especially hypocritical for Saudi officials, who publicly condemned the acts of violence in Paris against the Charlie Hebdo staff, to condone the brutal beating of a citizen for freely expressing his opinions. (Of course, Saudi Arabia wasn't the only country to condemn the events in France despite a poor record on freedom of speech. Egypt, Turkey and Russia all sent officials to the Paris march.)

Not only is Badawi's punishment utterly disproportionate to his crime, but his crime shouldn't even be considered a crime. The Saudis should immediately end all plans to inflict physical torture upon Badawi.

Top earners are taxed plenty  
The Oklahoma

The rich get richer because they don't pay enough federal income taxes. Ergo, the poor stay poor even if they don't pay any income taxes.

This seems to be the belief of Barack Obama and his fellow progressives. Obama used the tale quite successfully to fend off a challenge from Mitt Romney in 2012. Romney, of course, was a poster child for the rich-don't-pay-enough taxes narrative.

"Those who have done well, including me, should pay our fair share in taxes to contribute to the nation that made our success possible," Obama said. The rich, he said, "shouldn't get a better deal" than everyone else.

If the wealthy are getting a better deal, the word hasn't gone out. Perhaps it's only those nefarious 1-percenters who are getting the better deal. Perhaps it's only the Koch Brothers?

New information from The Tax Foundation, gleaned from the Internal Revenue Service, shows that in 2012 the top 5 percent earned 37 percent of total adjusted gross income but paid 59 percent of federal income taxes. Their effective tax rate was 21 percent.

Jared Meyer, of the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, said, "These data make it possible to fact-check the claim that in 2012, the rich skimmed on their tax rate compared to the rest of the country."

Fact is, the top 1 percent alone paid 38 percent of all federal income taxes collected. They had an effective tax rate of 23 percent, or seven times higher than the rate paid by the bottom half of income earners. The bottom half earned 11 percent of total adjusted gross income but paid only 3 percent of taxes collected.

This isn't an argument for raising taxes on lower-income or middle-income Americans. It's a counter-argument to the trope that the rich don't pay their "fair share" — whatever that is. If 50 percent of income earners are responsible for just 3 percent of tax collections, then the other half are paying 97 percent.

Consider that the top 10 percent are responsible for 70.2 percent of the total. So the other 90 percent are paying less than 30 percent. What do they get in exchange?

Congressional Budget Office data show that those who pay the most in federal income taxes get on average 19 cents of benefits for every dollar in taxes paid. Those who pay the least in taxes (or none at all), get \$18.20 in benefits for every dollar collected from them.

Thus, Meyer said, "The rich are subsidizing middle-income as well as low-income Americans — the middle quintile of earners received \$2.23 in benefits for each dollar they paid."

It's true that including state and local (where applicable) income taxes tends to skew the results. The numbers above concern only the federal income tax. But it was that tax alone to which Obama was referring in his "fair share" remarks.

Oklahoma's personal income tax doesn't favor the rich so much as it penalizes lower-income workers. The top marginal tax rate kicks in at a relatively low income level. That, rather than another top rate reduction, should be the focus of future tax system reform.

Washington's initial income tax a century ago affected virtually nobody but the top 1 percent, the only ones subject to the tax. Over the years, Uncle Sam has reached down to get money for more and more income groups. Collections of all federal taxes was below 3 percent of gross domestic product before the income tax was started. The figure is now approaching 20 percent.

The Great Divider's "fair share" rhetoric doesn't reflect reality. What it may reflect, Meyer said, is that Washington "needs more funds to continue further entrenched in Americans' lives."

Step up for people of Ukraine  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The trouble in Ukraine continues after a year of bloodshed, with the latest fighting near the already leveled airport of Donetsk.

It started with the blow-up of the corrupt government — President Viktor Yanukovich, who fled to Russia with nearly \$17 billion looted from Ukraine's treasury. He was succeeded in Kiev by President Petro Poroshenko and Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk. Then Russia peeled off Crimea and part of eastern Ukraine, including the cities of Donetsk and Luhansk, based on its military strength and the Russian-speaking Ukrainians it backed and armed. The Ukrainian government has been right to fight to keep its territory.

Russia's neighbors are following the conflict with keen interest. Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and the Baltic states, and the Russian action, particularly its support of Ukraine's Russian-speaking minority, as a threat to their own independence. Other European countries, including Germany, see Russia's aggression as a threat, but also find the economic sanctions put on Russia and all parties a constraint on their conduct of business relations.

As usual, those who pay the price for the fighting are the ordinary people on the ground. It is estimated that nearly 5,000 have been killed since last April. ...

An accord to end the fighting was reached last week, but it is far from clear that the Security and Cooperation in Europe in September between Russia, Ukraine and the separatists from Donetsk and Luhansk. Sadly, it has not been respected. It is time for the OSCE, the United Nations Security Council and other international elements to take action to stop the killing and destruction in Ukraine stop now.





## NHL

## Scoreboard

## Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	PP	OT	GA
Tampa Bay	48	30	14	4	64	156	127		
Detroit	47	27	11	9	63	139	119		
Montreal	45	29	13	3	61	123	106		
Boston	48	25	16	7	57	126	121		
Florida	44	20	18	10	50	107	122		
Ottawa	46	19	18	9	47	126	128		
Toronto	48	22	23	3	47	142	150		
Buffalo	47	17	30	3	31	89	167		

Metropolitan Division									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	PP	OT	GA
N.Y. Islanders	45	24	14	1	63	151	129		
Pittsburgh	46	26	12	8	60	138	117		
N.Y. Rangers	44	27	13	4	59	134	106		
Washington	46	24	13	9	58	137	109		
Philadelphia	48	19	22	8	45	130	146		
Columbus	45	20	22	3	43	113	142		
New Jersey	47	17	22	8	42	107	134		
Carolina	46	16	25	3	37	98	120		

## Western Conference

Central Division									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	PP	OT	GA
Nashville	45	30	10	5	65	137	104		
St. Louis	46	29	12	5	62	148	111		
Chicago	47	30	15	2	62	148	108		
Winnipeg	48	26	14	8	60	135	117		
Colorado	48	29	18	10	59	125	117		
Dallas	46	21	18	7	49	144	151		
Minnesota	46	20	20	6	46	126	137		

Pacific Division									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	PP	OT	GA
Anaheim	47	31	10	6	68	139	124		
San Jose	48	25	17	6	56	131	132		
Vancouver	45	26	16	5	55	124	114		
Calgary	47	27	19	3	53	136	125		
Los Angeles	48	20	15	12	52	129	126		
Arizona	46	16	16	5	37	105	156		
Edmonton	47	12	26	9	33	109	158		

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss.

Tuesday's games									
Edmonton	5	Washington	4	50					
Detroit	5	Minnesota	4	50					
N.Y. Rangers	3	Ottawa	2	OT					
Philadelphia	2	Nashville	1	OT					
Tampa Bay	4	Vancouver	1	OT					
Chicago	6	Arizona	1						

Wednesday's games									
Chicago	3	Pittsburgh	2	50					
Colorado	3	Boston	2	50					
Ottawa	4	Toronto	3	50					
Winnipeg	4	Columbus	0						
Anaheim	6	Calgary	3						
San Jose	4	Los Angeles	2						

Thursday's games									
No games scheduled									
Friday's games									
No games scheduled									
Saturday's games									
No games scheduled									
Sunday's games									
All-Star Game									
No games scheduled									

## Wednesday

## Senators 4, Maple Leafs 3

Toronto									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	PP	OT	GA
Ottawa	48	30	14	4	64	156	127		
First Period—1, Ottawa, Hoffman 16 (Stone, Cecil), 2:02. 2, Ottawa, Karlsson 10 (Hoffman, Ryan), 11:53. 3, Ottawa, Zibanejad 11 (Ryan, Methot), 19:40.									

Second Period—4, Toronto, Clarkson 10 (Hoffman, Winick), 13:25. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Third Period—5, Toronto, Kadrlin 13 (Riviere, Gardiner), 2:36 (pp), 6, Ottawa, Karlsson 11 (Michalek, Pageau), 15:20. 7, Toronto, van Riemsdyk 20 (Kessel, Gardiner), 18:37. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

Shots on goal—Toronto 9-14-17-40. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Shots on goal—Ottawa 6-9-6-26. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Goals—Toronto, Reimer 6-9 (26 shots, 7 saves). Ottawa, Anderson 13-11-7 (40-37). <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

A=18,894 (19,153). T=2:33.

## Blackhawks 3, Penguins 2 (SO)

Chicago									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	PP	OT	GA
Pittsburgh	48	30	14	4	64	156	127		
First Period—1, Chicago, Rundblad 3 (Hossa, Towes), 5:56.									

Second Period—2, Chicago, Hossa 10 (Goobrook, Sako), 2:41 (pp), 6, Ottawa, Karlsson 11 (Michalek, Pageau), 15:20. 7, Toronto, van Riemsdyk 20 (Kessel, Gardiner), 18:37. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Shots on goal—Chicago 6-9-5-26. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Goals—Chicago 6-9-5-26. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

Shots on goal—Pittsburgh 10-12-10-32. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Shots on goal—Pittsburgh 10-12-10-32. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Goals—Chicago, Crawford 18-10-2 (35 shots, 33 saves). Pittsburgh, Riley 22-9-5 (26-24). <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

A=15,655 (18,387). T=2:35.

## Jets 4, Blue Jackets 0

Columbus									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	PP	OT	GA
Winnipeg	45	24	14	1	63	151	129		
First Period—1, Winnipeg, Wheeler 13 (Ladd, Little), 1:08. 2, Winnipeg, Kane 10 (Schiefel), 5:06.									

Second Period—3, Winnipeg, Slater 2 (Harrison, Trouba), 4:45. 4, Winnipeg, Thorburn 4 (Lowy, Haislcluk), 14:10. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Shots on goal—Columbus 14-7-8-29. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Goals—Winnipeg 4-0-3. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

Goals—Columbus, Bobrovsky 16-15-12 (12 shots-9 saves), McElhinney 7-34-2 second, 17-15. Winnipeg, Hutchinson 14-2-2 (29-29). <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
A=15,016 (15,004). T=2:27. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

## Avalanche 3, Bruins 2 (SO)

Boston									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	PP	OT	GA
Colorado	48	30	14	4	64	156	127		
First Period—1, Colorado, Ignina 14 (Tangway, Duchene), 19:59.									

Second Period—2, Boston, Krug 9 (Lucic, Pastnak), 6:18. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Third Period—3, Boston, Marchand 13 (Krug, R.Smith), 4:47. 4, Colorado, O'Reilly 9 (Everberg, Mitchell), 18:15. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

Shots on goal—Boston 0 (R.Smith), Colorado 1 (MacKinnon G, Duchene NG), 20-14-24. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Shots on goal—Boston 7-12-5-0-26. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Goals—Boston 3-0-3. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

Goals—Boston, Risk 20-11-7 (36 shots-34 saves). Colorado, Varlamov 12-6-22 (24-22). <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
A=16,832 (18,007). T=2:36. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

## Ducks 6, Flames 3

Calgary									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	PP	OT	GA
Anaheim	45	24	14	1	63	151	129		
First Period—1, Anaheim, Palmieri 9 (Beleskey), 4:41. 2, Anaheim, Maroon 10 (Lovejoy, Fowler), 14:57. 3, Anaheim, Lovejoy 1 (Thompson), 17:04.									

Second Period—4, Anaheim, Jackman 4 (Bourque, Thompson), 9:37. 5, Calgary, Backlund 6 (Bourque), 11:13. 6, Calgary, Monahan 15 (Claudeau, Giordano), 19:12. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Third Period—7, Anaheim, Getzlaf 15 (Perry, Robak), 3:44. 8, Calgary, Colborne 5 (Bourque, Wideman), 18:14. 9, Anaheim, Kesler 13 (Perry), 19:41 (en). <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

Shots on goal—Calgary 10-13-10-33. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Goals—Calgary 6-1-1. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Power-play opportunities—Calgary 0 of 3. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

Goals—Calgary, Orto 4-1-0 (11 shots-7 saves). Hiller 9-37 second, 15-14). Anaheim, Andersen 26-6-5 (33-30). <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
A=16,828 (17,174). T=2:31. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

## Sharks 4, Kings 2

Los Angeles									
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	PP	OT	GA
San Jose	48	30	14	4	64	156	127		
First Period—1, San Jose, Couture 17 (Irwin, Niemi), 19:44.									

Second Period—2, Los Angeles, Brown 8 (Gaborik, Kopitar), 11:39. 3, San Jose, Couture 18 (Irwin, Niemi), 16:39 (pp). <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Third Period—4, San Jose, Pavelski 24 (Marleau, Visco), 8:27 (pp), 5, Los Angeles, Carter 12 (Kopitar, Shore), 19:37 (pp). <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

Shots on goal—Los Angeles 6-6-16-28. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Goals—San Jose 10-9-5-26. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									
Power-play opportunities—Los Angeles 1 of 5. <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th> <th data-kind="ghost"></th>									

Goals—San Jose 10-9-5-26. <th data-kind="ghost"></th>	
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## COLLEGE BASKETBALL/NBA

## College roundup

## No. 12 Utah cruises past Washington St.

The Associated Press

**SALT LAKE CITY** — Brandon Taylor had 18 points and seven assists, and Delon Wright added 17 points and eight assists to help No. 12 Utah beat Washington State 86-64 on Wednesday night.

After losing to then-No. 10 Arizona 69-51 last Saturday, the Utes (15-3, 5-1 Pac-12) rebounded by returning to their winning ways at home, where Utah has defeated 31 straight unranked opponents.

Jordan Loveridge scored 14 points for Utah, which played without Jakob Poeltl (ankle) but exploited a 20-1 edge in points off turnovers to turn the game into a blowout.

DaVonté Lacy scored 15 points for the Cougars (9-9, 3-3). Josh Hawkins had 12 points and 10 rebounds for his 11th double-double of the season.

**No. 14 Wichita State 76, Missouri State 53:** Ron Baker made five three-pointers and finished with 15 points to lead Wichita State over host Missouri State.

Tekele Cotton and Fred VanVleet also scored 15 apiece for the Shockers (17-2, 7-0 Missouri Valley Conference), who have won 25 consecutive conference games dating to last year.

**No. 15 North Carolina 87, Wake Forest 71:** Kennedy Meeks scored 12 of his 16 points after halftime to help host North Carolina pull away.

Brice Johnson added 19 points for the Tar Heels (15-4, 5-1 Atlantic Coast Conference) who scored 50 points in the paint on the way to their fourth straight league win.

**No. 20 Northern Iowa 66, Indiana State 60:** Matt Bohannon scored 17 points. Seth Tuttle had 16 and Northern Iowa held off visiting Indiana State for its sixth straight victory.

Jeremy Morgan had 11 points for the Panthers (17-2, 6-1 Missouri Valley Conference), who

blew a 10-point lead before rallying for their 13th consecutive home win.

**No. 21 Baylor 81, Huston-Tillotson 61:** At Waco, Texas, Rico Gathers set career highs with 25 points and a Big 12-record 28 rebounds, and Baylor finally pulled away in the second half against NAIA school Huston-Tillotson.

**Army 65, Colgate 64:** Tanner Plomb hit four three-pointers and finished with 18 points to lead Army past Colgate.

Colgate's Matt McMullen converted the three-point play for a 61-60 advantage with a 25-second left. Plomb buried a three on the ensuing possession to regain the lead at 63-61 with 18 seconds to go. Ethan Jacobs then turned the ball over, which led to the game-sealing free throws from Kyle Wilson with just six seconds to go. McMullen hit a three-pointer at the buzzer for the final margin.

**Lehigh 61, Navy 47:** Brandon Alston had three three-pointers with 14 points, Austin Price scored 11 and Lehigh pulled away early in the second half to beat Navy.

Justin Goldsborough's layup with 17:01 left broke a 34-all tie, giving the Mountain Hawks (9-9, 3-4 Patriot League) the lead for good.

**Butler 64, Creighton 61:** Roosevelt Jones had 18 points and 10 rebounds, Andrew Chrabaszec made a go-ahead layup with 55 seconds left and host Butler held off Creighton.

**Michigan State 66, Penn State 60:** Brandon Dawson had his fourth double-double in five games with 12 points, 10 rebounds and three important blocked shots as host Michigan State got past Penn State.

Gavin Schilling added 11 points and 10 rebounds for the Spartans.



FERNANDO SALAZAR, THE WICHITA EAGLE/AP

Wichita State's Fred VanVleet, right, heads up court after beating Missouri State's Tyler McCullough to a loose ball during Wednesday's game in Springfield, Mo. The No. 14 Shockers won 76-53.



ALEX BRANDON/AP

Thunder forward Kevin Durant, left, and Wizards forward Paul Pierce go for the loose ball, which Pierce was able to grab, Wednesday in Washington. Oklahoma city won 105-103 in overtime.

## NBA roundup

## Late layup lifts Thunder

## Westbrook hits last-second shot in OT to get past Wizards

The Associated Press

**WASHINGTON** — Russell Westbrook drove for the winning layup with 0.8 seconds left in overtime, and Kevin Durant scored 34 points in Oklahoma City's fourth consecutive victory, a 105-103 win over Washington.

Durant and Westbrook scored all 13 of the Thunder's points in the extra period, including Durant's dunk over Marcin Gortat and Westbrook's uncontested layup off of an inbound play after Oklahoma City had called timeout with 3.6 seconds remaining.

Westbrook finished with 32 points and led a third-quarter comeback that made up a 12-point halftime deficit. Durant, the D.C. native whose 2016 free agency is much anticipated in his hometown, added seven rebounds.

Durant broke out of a career-worst 0-for-14 slump from three-point range by making four from long range after halftime, and he had an impressive throw-down dunk on Marcin Gortat in overtime. Westbrook led a third-quarter comeback that made up a 12-point halftime deficit as the Thunder improved to 19-8 after a 3-12 start.

Nene scored 24 points for the Wizards, including nine of Washington's 11 points in overtime. John Wall had 28 points and 13 assists.

**Hawks 110, Pacers 91:** DeMarre Carroll and Jeff Teague each scored 17 points, Kyle Korver dunked for the first time in more than two years, and host Atlanta tied a franchise record with its 14th straight win.

With the victory, the Hawks improved to a stunning 35-8 and Mike Budenholzer clinched a spot as the Eastern Conference coach in next month's All-Star game in New York City.

**Pistons 128, Magic 118:** Brandon Jennings had 24 points and a career-high 21 assists, and host Detroit held on for the win.

Andre Drummond added 26 points and 16 rebounds for the Pistons, who have won 12 of 15.

**Suns 118, Trail Blazers 113:** Eric Bledsoe had a season-high 33 points, and host Phoenix managed to get the win after blowing a big first-half lead.

Isiah Thomas added a season-high 27 points for the Suns, who have won seven consecutive home games.

**Grizzlies 92, Raptors 86:** Marc Gasol scored 26 points for host Memphis, and Zach Randolph had 19 points and 13 rebounds.

The Grizzlies broke open a close game with a 13-3 run midway through the fourth quarter. There were 14 ties and six lead changes for the night.

**Cavaliers 106, Jazz 92:** LeBron James scored 26 points, Kevin Love added 19 and rejuvenated host Cleveland earned its fourth consecutive victory.

Shaking off a flu bug that forced him to miss practice Tuesday and also slowed Kyrie Irving, James added nine assists and seven rebounds. The Cavs are 4-1 since the four-time MVP returned after missing eight games with a strained back and knee.

**Pelicans 96, Lakers 80:** Anthony Davis scored 29 points and

blocked four shots in his return from a sprained toe, leading host New Orleans to the win.

Los Angeles shot 37 percent from the field in its season-long sixth consecutive loss.

**Nets 103, Kings 100:** Brook Lopez scored 22 points and blocked six shots, leading visiting Brooklyn to its second win in the last 10 games.

Sacramento lost its fifth straight game. DeMarcus Cousins had 28 points and 14 rebounds, and Rudy Gay scored 25 points.

**Mavericks 98, Timberwolves 75:** Chandler Parsons scored 22 points, and Dallas hit 11 three-pointers.

Parsons made 9 of 13 shots and Dirk Nowitzki added 16 points and nine rebounds in 26 minutes for the visiting Mavericks (30-13), who crept in front of idle Houston (29-13) for sole possession of fourth place in the demanding Western Conference.

**Hornets 78, Heat 76:** Kemba Walker scored 15 points, Bismack Biyombo had 12 points and 12 rebounds, and surging Charlotte held on for the win at home.

The Hornets won for the eighth time in nine games despite going without a field goal in the final seven minutes.

**Nicks 98, 76ers 91:** Carmelo Anthony had 27 points and 11 rebounds, powering New York to the road win.

The worst team in the Eastern Conference is suddenly on a hot streak. New York snapped its 16-game losing streak Monday with a win against New Orleans and made it two straight with the victory against the lowly Sixers.





## TENNIS/FIGURE SKATING



VINCENT THIA/AP

Serena Williams yells in frustration during her second round match Thursday against Vera Zvonareva at the Australian Open in Melbourne, Australia. Williams, the No. 1 seed, won 7-5, 6-0.

# Serena rallies to 3rd round

Unseeded Azarenka tops Wozniacki; Djokovic, Wawrinka move on

By JOHN PYE

The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Top-ranked Serena Williams fended off three set points before going on a 10-game roll to beat Vera Zvonareva 7-5, 6-0 and move into the third round of the Australian Open.

Men's No. 1 Novak Djokovic had an easier run, spending a minute less than Williams on Rod Laver Arena in his 84-minute, 6-0, 6-1, 6-4 win over No. 88-ranked Andrey Kuznetsov on Thursday.

Defending champion Stan Wawrinka, who ended four-time champion Djokovic's 25-match winning streak at Melbourne Park in the quarterfinals last year, advanced to the third round for the seventh consecutive year with a 7-6 (4), 7-6 (4), 6-3 win over No. 194-ranked qualifier Marius Copil.

"I don't compare from last year to this year. Just a new Grand Slam," said Wawrinka, who is defending a Grand Slam title for the first time. "It's been two matches now. Going to be ready now for the next one."

Williams, seeking a sixth Australian and 19th Grand Slam title, saved three set points in the ninth game before holding to swing the momentum of her match against Zvonareva, a two-time Grand Slam finalist who played only five tournaments in 2014.

That's when she told herself: "You know Serena, you've done so well here, you have nothing to

lose."

"Things really clicked. I had no other option but for things to click," she added. "Yeah, I just had to start playing better."

Williams said she had to transition quickly to get past such an experienced player in the second round.

She said she was thinking: "This girl has been ranked as high as No. 2 in the world ... she's a very quality player, she knows what to do."

After breaking Williams' serve twice in the first set, Zvonareva only won eight points in the second set and didn't get close to another break-point chance.

Unseeded Victoria Azarenka beat No. 8-seeded Caroline Wozniacki, the 2014 U.S. Open runner-up, 6-4, 6-2.

"I knew that I'm unseeded so I can play anybody. I just accept whoever is on the opposite side," Azarenka said. "I just try to do my best. She had such an incredible end of last season so I knew I had to step up my game and really take my chances today. I think I did that pretty well."

Azarenka's ranking slipped into the 40s this month because of a series of injuries that restricted her to nine tournaments in 2014 — only the top 32 players get seedings at the majors.

Williams will next play No. 26 Elina Svitolina, who beat Nicole Gibbs 7-6 (3), 7-6 (6).

Venus Williams had a 6-2, 6-3 win against fellow American

Lauren Davis. The elder of the Williams sisters, a seven-time major winner, hasn't been beyond the third round at a major since reaching the fourth round at Wimbledon on 2011.

Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitová, seeded No. 4, beat Mona Barthel 6-2, 6-4 to move into a third-round match against Madison Keys, who rallied to beat No. 29 Casey Dellacqua 2-6, 6-1, 6-1.

Sixth-seeded Agnieszka Radwanska needed only 44 minutes to race through her 6-0, 6-1 win over Johanna Larsson, continuing her run of reaching the third round or better at every Australian Open since 2010. In the next round, she'll face No. 30 Varvara Lepchenko, a 6-1, 7-6 (1) winner over Ajla Tomljanovic.

No. 11 Dominika Cibulkova, the 2014 finalist, No. 19 Alize Cornet and No. 24 Garbine Muguruza also advanced.

On the men's side, U.S. Open finalist Kei Nishikori beat Ivan Dodig 4-6, 7-5, 6-2, 7-6 (0), getting a crucial service break in the 10th game of the fourth set when Dodig was serving for the set and then dominating in the tiebreaker. He will next face Steve Johnson, who beat No. 30 Santiago Giraldo 6-3, 6-4, 6-2.

No. 12 Feliciano Lopez was leading 4-6, 4-6, 7-6 (3), 4-0 when Adrian Panarino retired from their second-round match and No. 19 John Isner beat Andreas Haider-Maurer 6-4, 7-6 (4), 4-6, 6-4.

# Wagner, Gold seek another US crown

By RACHEL COHEN  
The Associated Press

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Gracie Gold practiced making eye contact with the audience. She "did so many spins it drove me nuts."

What the reigning U.S. figure skating champion couldn't do for nearly all of December was jump. She's now had 3½ weeks to work on her triples to try to defend her title when nationals open Thursday.

"I still feel almost as if I'd been training the whole time," Gold said Wednesday.

Gold and Ashley Wagner were the only Americans to qualify individually for the Grand Prix Final. Gold had to pull out because of a stress fracture in her left foot, while Wagner went on to win bronze.

Wagner will be seeking her third U.S. title, winning two straight before Gold broke through last year. So both know they can thrive on the national stage. This week's competition is also a chance to show they can put together the kind of program to win a medal at the world championships. No American woman has accomplished that feat since Kimmie Meissner won gold and Sasha Cohen took bronze in 2006.

Before last year's U.S. Championships, Wagner, now 23, figured the 2014 Games would be her last chance for an Olympic medal. In Sochi, she decided she'd progressed so much in six months with coach Rafael Arutyunyan that she wanted to see what they could achieve together in four more years.

A win this week to open the cycle before the 2018 Pyeongchang Games, Wagner said, would mean "starting in the right direction to the Olympic podium."

Wagner was seventh in Sochi. Her solid performances were redemption for last year's nationals, where she fell twice in her free skate to finish a distant fourth, earning one of the three Olympic spots based on her previous successes.

Polina Edmunds was ninth in Sochi at age 15, competing in her first international competition at the senior level.

Gold, now 19, was fourth, though well out of the bronze position. She thinks she initially dislocated a bone in her foot during off-ice training this fall — an injury that's common among runners but not figure skaters — which led to the stress fracture. So Gold isn't allowed to run right now, but she can cleanly land a triple lutz-triple toe loop combination. Gold has needed to limit the number of triple toes she attempts in practice, but otherwise she's been pleasantly surprised at how quickly her jumps came back.

Now she'll try to land them in competition starting with Thursday's short program at the Greensboro Coliseum. The pairs short program starts earlier Thursday, with the competition wide open after two-time defending

champs Marissa Castelli and Simon Shnapir split in the spring.

In ice dancing, which opens Friday, Olympic gold medalists Meryl Davis and Charlie White are taking a break, leaving Madison Chock and Evan Bates as the favorites.

The men's short program follows later Friday. Jeremy Abbott won his fourth U.S. title a year ago at what was supposed to be his last nationals before retirement. Then he rethought those plans, still seeking to match his success at U.S. Championships at a major international event. The 29-year-old Abbott's father, who suffered from Parkinson's disease, died earlier this month.

Jason Brown joined Abbott as the two American men on the 2014 Olympic team. Brown, who turned 20 last month, still isn't ready to add a quad, which is all but a prerequisite to win major international medals. For the first time, Brown doesn't come into nationals as an underdog.

His frenetic "Riverdance" long program that went viral after last year's U.S. Championships has been replaced by a more somber piece, a chance to challenge himself in a new way.

Max Aaron, the 2013 U.S. champ, is back, while big-jumping 15-year-old Nathan Chen will be competing at his first senior nationals.

They could all be chasing Brown, who can find a positive spin for practically anything, including the pressure of his sudden status as the favorite.

"Don't come in and think I have to be any different than I was the year before," he said of the advice he's received. "Just being myself through thick and thin, through the good and the bad, being that genuine same person that I am no matter what success I have."



NAM Y. HUN/AP

Gracie Gold looks to defend her U.S. title starting Thursday in Greensboro, N.C.

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL/SPORTS BRIEFS

## Prospects vie for NFL jobs at Senior Bowl

Small-school athletes get chance to show they can play at the next level

By JOHN ZENOR  
The Associated Press

MOBILE, Ala. — Ali Marpet knows none of his Senior Bowl counterparts from Ohio State and Texas have ever heard of his school.

Hobart College is hardly a football factory, but Marpet still made it from the tiny private liberal arts college in upstate New York onto the radar of NFL scouts and ultimately to the Senior Bowl. And this week he's finally getting to compete on a level playing field with those major college guys in their shared pursuit of pro careers.

Marpet, an offensive lineman, isn't alone. The rosters for Saturday's Senior Bowl have 14 players who competed below Football Bowl Subdivision, including Division III non-scholarship Hobart.

"Honestly, just to be here is awesome but I do want to show that I can dominate this level of competition," Marpet said.

Quarterback Bryan Bennett, who transferred from Oregon to FCS Southeastern Louisiana, joined South practice Wednesday, five hours after arriving in Mobile to replace Auburn's Nick Marshall (now playing defense). The group also includes Ivy

Leaguers Tyler Varga (Yale) and Zack Hodges (Harvard).

Some of the small-school guys, like Marpet and Tennessee State offensive lineman Robert Myers, started their college careers with few other options. Bennett left Oregon after getting beaten out by eventual Heisman Trophy winner Marcus Mariota, while linebacker Lynden Trail moved from Florida to FCS Norfolk State in pursuit of playing time and a more academically centered life studying mass communications.

"The biggest knock is being a small-school guy or playing against lesser competition," said Trail, Norfolk State's first Senior Bowl participant.

"But being here is an opportunity to show that, yes, I am a small-school guy but at the same time I am able to play with major D-1 prospects as well. I'm just here to showcase my versatility."

The 6-foot-6, 262-pounder, who had been a highly touted recruit, thrived in three seasons at Norfolk State after leaving Florida, where he couldn't get on the field. He was a two-time finalist for the Buck Buchanan Award as the top defensive player in FCS.

They're all trying to follow the route of players such as Tusculum's Ricardo Colclough, who be-



BRYNN ANDERSON/AP

Hobart offensive tackle Ali Marpet, center, runs drills Wednesday at Ladd-Peebles Stadium in Mobile, Ala., during practice for the Senior Bowl.

came a second-round pick by the Pittsburgh Steelers after playing in the 2004 Senior Bowl.

Myers has gone from introducing himself to scouts checking out other players to drawing an increasing amount of NFL interest himself during his career.

"My mentality is to come down here and prove that I can play with these guys at this level and most importantly play at the next level," the 6-5, 329-pounder said. "It's motivating. It's a positive pressure. I know I've got to come

down here and work hard and show them that I can make my way there and I can be successful in the NFL."

Marpet has followed a more unlikely route. The Liberty League co-offensive player of the year cheerfully offers some insight into Hobart: about 2,300 students. Located kind of in between Syracuse and Rochester. And an unlikely destination for NFL scouts.

Marpet didn't have a fancy training table but bought a gold

meal plan so he could eat every meal in the school cafeteria, fighting every step of the way to put on weight. Marpet went from 205 pounds as a high school junior to 255 pounds as a college freshman to a 6-4, 307-pound NFL prospect.

"It's not easy for me," Marpet said. "This is not my natural weight. Every meal is a struggle. It's a job."

Now he's trying to make football a job, too.

## Briefly

## Gordon to retire as full-time driver after 2015 season

The Associated Press

Jeff Gordon, the wildly popular four-time NASCAR champion, said Thursday he will retire as a full-time driver after the 2015 season.

The 43-year-old Gordon is coming off one of his best seasons in years. He won four times in 2014, including the Brickyard 400.

Gordon did not officially call his decision a retirement because there is "always the possibility I'll compete in selected events, although I currently have no plans to do that." He has spent his entire 23-year career in the No. 24 car with Hendrick Motorsports, and he delivered the news to his team at the shop.

"As a race car driver, much of what I've done throughout my life has been based on following my instincts and trying to make good decisions," Gordon said. "I thought long and hard about my future this past year and during the offseason, and I've decided 2015 will be the last time I compete for a championship."

Gordon has 92 career Sprint Cup wins and championships in 1995, 1997, 1998



DARRYL GRAMHAM/AP

Jeff Gordon announced Thursday he plans to step back from full-time racing following this season.

and 2001. Gordon is third in career victories, trailing Hall of Fame drivers Richard Petty (200) and David Pearson (105). He has three Daytona 500 victories and a record five Brickyard 400 wins.

## Martinez's Hall plaque to have Red Sox cap, Smoltz's Braves

COOPERSTOWN, N.Y. — Pedro Martinez's Hall of Fame plaque will have the cap of the Boston Red Sox and John Smoltz's will have the Atlanta Braves.

The Hall of Fame made the announcement Thursday. It said last week that Randy Johnson's will have the cap of the Arizona Diamondbacks.

Craig Biggio, the other player to be inducted on July 26, spent his entire 20-year major league career with the Houston Astros.

## Vonn fastest again in World Cup downhill training

ST. MORITZ, Switzerland — Lindsey Vonn was fastest in a downhill training run on Thursday as she pursues a record-extending 64th World Cup win.

The American racer timed 1 minute, 48.26 seconds on the Engiadina course, 0.64 seconds faster than Johanna Schnarf of Italy.

Vonn is the favorite for the downhill on

Saturday and a super-G on Sunday after winning both events at Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy.

In other skiing news:

■ Bode Miller said it's "not likely" he will race in Saturday's World Cup downhill despite a strong final training run on Thursday, in Kitzbuehel, Austria.

Miller, 37, underwent surgery just over eight weeks ago, and said any doctor would tell him not to race yet.

## Solo suspended for 30 days from US national team

Goalkeeper Hope Solo has been suspended from the U.S. women's national team for 30 days and won't participate in matches next month in Europe.

U.S. Soccer did not specify the reason for the suspension, announced Wednesday night. It comes after the arrest of her husband, former Seattle Seahawks tight end Jerryman Stevens, earlier this week on suspicion of driving under the influence.

Solo was in the car when Stevens was pulled over in Manhattan Beach, Calif.



# NFL

## Bears hire Gase as OC

LAKE FOREST, Ill. — Adam Gase is the new offensive coordinator for the Bears, following coach John Fox from Denver to Chicago.

The Bears also interviewed Gase for head coach before selecting Fox for the job. Gase also had head-coaching interviews with San Francisco, Buffalo and Atlanta.

Gase was Denver's offensive coordinator for the past two seasons, and the Broncos led the NFL in scoring offense, total offense and passing offense during that time period. He joined the Broncos as the wide receivers coach in 2009.

The Bears also hired Ed Donatell to coach defensive backs. Donatell replaces Jon Hoke, who was released Wednesday.

Donatell is a 36-year coaching veteran, including 24 in the NFL. He spent the last four seasons as the secondary coach for the 49ers.

## Ireland joins Saints' staff

MOBILE, Ala. — Saints general manager Mickey Loomis says former Miami Dolphins general manager Jeff Ireland has joined New Orleans' front office as one of the club's chief scouts.

Loomis says no formal title for Ireland has been decided upon yet, but Ireland will oversee college scouting while Terry Fontenot will continue to oversee pro scouting.

Ireland's hiring, announced during Senior Bowl activities Wednesday, comes a day after Loomis fired former college scouting director Rick Reiprish, who had been with the club for a decade.

It also comes less than two weeks after Ryan Pace, formerly a top personnel executive in New Orleans, left to become general manager of the Chicago Bears.

Loomis says that after Pace left, the Saints "needed to add some experience, an evaluator from outside the building" who would bring "fresh ideas."

## Jaguars add Olson

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Greg Olson's experience calling plays and his history mentoring young quarterbacks stood out to Jacksonville Jaguars coach Gus Bradley.

That's why Bradley chose Olson as his offensive coordinator Wednesday.

"He's a really, really good developmental coach," Bradley said following Senior Bowl practice in Mobile, Ala. "I think that's what impressed me. And he has a style and a conviction. I just thought he would be a great fit."

Olson spent the past two seasons as Oakland's offensive coordinator. That followed a one-year stint as Jacksonville's assistant head coach/quarterbacks coach — Coach Mike McCarthy, Olson and several other assistants were fired after a 2-14 season.

Olson replaces Jedd Fisch, who was fired after two lackluster seasons in which the Jaguars were ranked at or near the bottom of the NFL in nearly every offensive category.

## Browns go with DeFilippo

CLEVELAND — The Browns have their sixth offensive coordinator in six years.

Cleveland hired John DeFilippo, a former Oakland assistant who has a reputation for developing young quarterbacks, to run its offense on Wednesday. He fills the vacancy created when Kyle Shanahan resigned after one season on Jan. 8 with two years left on his contract.

DeFilippo has worked as a college coordinator but not in the same capacity in the NFL. He's inheriting an offense with some talent and potential but also has uncertainty at quarterback.

DeFilippo previously worked for one season with Browns coach Mike Pettine.

— The Associated Press



JULIO CORTES, LEFT, AND ROSS D. FRANKLIN, RIGHT/AP

Indianapolis quarterback Andrew Luck, left, was the first player taken by Hall of Famer Cris Carter on Wednesday during a draft of players for Sunday's Pro Bowl. Hall of Famer Michael Irvin followed by selecting Dallas quarterback Tony Romo, right.

# Luck, Romo top selections

## Carter, Irvin draft players for teams

By BOB BAUM  
The Associated Press

PHOENIX — Like sandlot players when they were kids, Hall of Famers Cris Carter and Michael Irvin chose sides on Wednesday night.

This time, they were drafting some of the best football players in the NFL for Team Carter and Team Irvin, the Pro Bowl matchup on Sunday.

Quarterback Andrew Luck of Indianapolis went No. 1 to Team Carter. Irvin chose Dallas Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo as No. 2.

They were the only two quarterbacks left from the original Pro Bowl roster. The other six bowed out.

The NFL scrapped its AFC vs. NFC format and went to the current system a year ago. The game is being played for one year in Glendale, Ariz., site of next week's Super Bowl, and will return to Hawaii next season.

Not everyone loves the new format. "I think there was something about coming out here and saying 'I'm from the AFC and this is my team,'" New York Jets center Nick Mangold said. "Now that it's not, I'd be the first to say I'm not a fan of how they do it."

Luck didn't exactly offer a ringing endorsement.

"It's interesting," he said. "I've only done it a couple of times. Like anything, there's

some good and some bad. It's all right."

Both teams went with wide receivers with their next two picks.

Cincinnati's A.J. Green was picked No. 3 by Carter. Odell Beckham Jr. of the New York Giants was No. 4 to Irvin. Kansas City running back Jamaal Charles was selected No. 5 by Team Carter. Team Irvin went with Dallas offensive tackle Tyron Smith at No. 6.

Wide receiver Antonio Brown of Pittsburgh and defensive end J.J. Watt of Houston already had been named co-captains for Team Carter. Dallas running back DeMarco Murray and Cleveland cornerback Joe Haden are co-captains for Team Irvin.

The 2-hour draft was held on a brightly colored stage, with Carter in neon yellow and Irvin in bright orange. It was held in front of an enthusiastic crowd in the ballroom of the swanky Biltmore Resort. Hundreds of fans lined far around the building in hopes of getting in. Many left disappointed.

Baltimore's John Harbaugh and his staff will coach Team Carter. Dallas' Jason Garrett and his staff will coach Team Irvin.

The teams work out at Luke Air Force Base west of Phoenix on Thursday, then have practices Friday and Saturday at Scottsdale Community College.

More than a few players longed to be on the beach as in past, and future, Pro Bowl

## Pro Bowl rosters

<b>Sunday, Jan. 25</b> <b>At University of Phoenix Stadium</b> <b>Glendale, Ariz.</b> <b>TEAM CARTER</b> <b>Wide Receivers</b> Antonio Brown, Pittsburgh <b>Guards</b> Evan Mathis, Philadelphia; Mike Pouncey, Miami; Josh Sitton, Green Bay <b>Centers</b> Jason Kelce, Philadelphia; Maurkice Pouncey, Pittsburgh <b>Fullbacks</b> John Kuhn, Green Bay <b>Defensive Ends</b> J.J. Watt, Houston <b>Interior Linemen</b> Marcell Dareus, Buffalo; Dontari Poe, Kansas City; Kyle Williams, Buffalo <b>Specialists</b> Justin Bethel, Arizona; Devin Hester, Atlanta; Pat McAfee, Indianapolis; Cody Parkey, Philadelphia. <b>TEAM IRVIN</b> <b>Running Backs</b> DeMarco Murray, Dallas <b>Guards</b> Kyle Long, Chicago; Zack Martin, Dallas; Marshal Yanda, Baltimore <b>Centers</b> Travis Frederick, Dallas; Nick Mangold, New York Jets <b>Fullbacks</b> Marcel Reece, Oakland <b>Cornerbacks</b> <b>Interior Linemen</b> Geno Atkins, Cincinnati; Aaron Donald, St. Louis; Sheldon Richardson, New York Jets <b>Specialists</b> Kevin Huber, Cincinnati; Darren Sproles, Philadelphia; Darrell Stuckey, San Diego; Adam Vinatieri, Indianapolis.
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years.  
"I'd like to be in Hawaii, you know," Arizona Cardinals defensive end Calais Campbell said. "It's a free trip, a vacation in Hawaii, you can't beat that."

## NFL PLAYOFFS

## NFL undecided on keeping roof open for the Super Bowl

By JOSH HOFFNER  
The Associated Press

PHOENIX — The Super Bowl stadium in sunny Arizona will present a dilemma for NFL officials as they grapple with a question that is faced by many pro sports teams in an era of retractable roofs: Whether to play the game with the roof open or closed.

The NFL says it plans to keep the retractable roof open at University of Phoenix Stadium for the Feb. 1 game between the Seattle Seahawks and New England Patriots, but if there is a sign of inclement weather, the roof will be shut.

The fact that the question is even up for debate may seem strange given the location. The game will be played in a place where tens of thousands of visitors flock each winter for the sole purpose of basking in the warm sun.

But the occupants of the stadium and the other three NFL teams with retractable roof stadiums actually play many more games indoors than with the roof open, even as their counterparts in cold-weather cities like Buffalo, Green Bay and Chicago get by in open-air facilities.

The Arizona Cardinals will not play a single game with the roof open this season, despite spectacular weather for some late-season games. The Dallas Cowboys opened the roof of their \$1.3 billion stadium once in the past two NFL seasons. The Indianapolis Colts have played about a third of

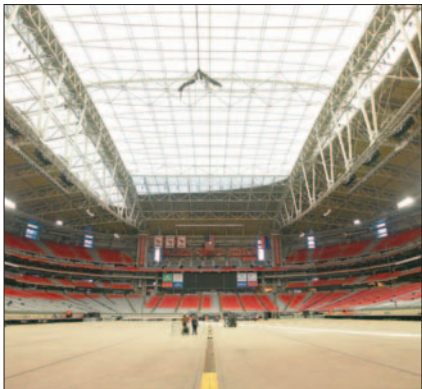
their games outside since opening their stadium in 2008, while the Houston Texans have opened their roof for about 40 percent of the games dating to their founding in 2002.

Since the Cardinals' stadium was built in 2006, the team has played 22 games with the roof open and 71 with it closed.

To the Cardinals, another stat is more telling. The team has sold out every game at University of Phoenix Stadium since it opened. In the 18 years it occupied the outdoor Sun Devil Stadium at Arizona State University, it sold out 12 games. The stifling heat and uncomfortable bleacher seating were partly to blame, but the team was also one of the worst in the league during that period.

The roof dilemma for the Arizona stadium is complicated by the vast swings in weather the Phoenix area sees over the course of a season. For the preseason and first month of the season, temperatures are in the unbearable range of 100 to 110 degrees, making it an easy call to close the roof. By season's end, the temperature can dip into the low teens. In the middle of the season, the temperature is fabulous but fans on one side of the arena complain that the setting sun is too bright.

"For a quarter or more of the game you're staring right in to the sun. And (fans) have frankly made us aware loud and clear that that's not an optimal experience for them," said Mark Dalton, vice president of media relations for the Cardinals.



ROSS D. FRANKLIN/AP

The roof remains closed at University of Phoenix Stadium, where Super Bowl XLIX will be played, while the grass field remained outside in the sun on Tuesday in Glendale, Ariz. At this point, the NFL says it plans to keep the retractable roof open at the stadium for the championship game on Feb. 1, 2015, between the Seattle Seahawks and New England Patriots but the plan can change as the league gets a better read on the weather forecast for game night.



CHARLES KRUPA/AP

New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick already received the largest fine for a coach in NFL history a few years ago. Now, in light of accusations that the Patriots knowingly deflated balls during last Sunday's AFC championship, he could face more repercussions as the Patriots try to prepare for the Super Bowl against Seattle.

## Deflated reputation

Belichick's actions no longer given benefit of doubt by fans, others around the league

By ROB MAADDI  
The Associated Press

**A**dd underinflated footballs to the list of incidents giving Bill Belichick a reputation for guile and playing above the rules.

Softer footballs wouldn't explain all of a rout that earned the New England Patriots a spot in the Super Bowl but it's another example of Belichick's reputation of searching for edges and bending any rules until he gets caught.

Vague injury reports. Spygate. Signing players with intel on opponents. And now, an open NFL investigation into whether the team cheated during its AFC championship win.

"Because it's the Patriots and they have a history, that brings in a different issue," former All-Pro running back Jerome Bettis said on ESPN. "There's some type of culture there that's conducive to cheating, and that's a problem."

On Thursday, the Patriots coach said he doesn't know how footballs became deflated during the game that got his team to the Super Bowl.

But Belichick declined to answer questions after saying he knew nothing about accusations that his team cheated with underinflated footballs in its win against the Colts in the AFC championship game.

The NFL is investigating. "I had no knowledge of this situation until Monday morning," said Belichick, who said he was "shocked" to learn the news.

The issue has drawn strong re-

**‘Because it’s the Patriots and they have a history, that brings in a different issue. There’s some type of culture there that’s conducive to cheating, and that’s a problem.’**

Jerome Bettis  
Former All-Pro running back, on the Patriots' latest rules violation

action from around the game and its fans as the Patriots prepare to play the Seattle Seahawks on Feb. 1 in Glendale, Arizona, for the NFL title.

Belichick declined to answer several questions after his opening remarks at his press conference, answering several questions by saying: "I've told you everything I know," and "I don't have an explanation."

Belichick no longer gets the benefit of the doubt among fans and those in football circles, even those who think he's the best coach in the league. Earlier this month, Hall of Fame coach Don Shula called him "Beli-cheat."

It all traces back to a reputation for gamesmanship that blossomed after the three-time Super Bowl winner's last title in 2004.

In 2007, Belichick was fined \$500,000 and the team was fined \$250,000 and stripped of its 2008 first-round draft choice by the NFL for videotaping New York Jets signals during a 2007 game.

At the time, opponents wondered whether he taped practices, too.

Last year, Cleveland Browns coach Mike Pettine suggested

Belichick might have gotten a copy of the Jets playbook through Alabama coach Nick Saban, an accusation denied by Saban and then-Jets coach Rex Ryan.

Belichick has signed players days before the Patriots faced their former team, opening up new avenues of intel. He also likes to tweak the NFL on injury reports. For years, Belichick listed Tom Brady as "probable" even though he didn't miss practice and played the games. And he's been known to list close to 20 players on the report, most with minor ailments.

And one week before questions of air pressure, some people questioned whether Belichick was bending the rules in a playoff win against Baltimore by using a four-man offensive linemen formation for three plays on a touchdown drive that helped the Patriots rally from a 14-point deficit. The formation — a backup tight end lined up as a tackle-eligible and a running back lined up as an ineligible receiver split wide — wasn't illegal, only creative and intentionally deceptive.

## SPORTS

**Overtime execution**Westbrook's late layup lifts Thunder over Wiz » **Page 26****NFL PLAYOFFS**

The NFL's latest scandal, this time involving deflated footballs in last Sunday's AFC championship game, is the most recent example of New England Patriots head coach Bill Belichick's willingness to push — and possible break — the boundaries of the NFL rulebook in pursuit of giving his team a competitive edge.

ELISE AMENDOLA/AP

A history of

**DECEPTION**Deflated balls just the latest incident of Belichick playing fast and loose with the rulebook » **Page 31**Blackhawks enter break with momentum after shootout win over Pens » **Page 25**Top seeds Djokovic, Williams advance to third round at Australian Open » **Page 28**

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